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CHEVELEY.

VOL. II.

————— I speak
Of what I know, and what I feel within.

WORDSWORTH.

“ Quare tunc formandi mores (inquit Erasmus) cùm mollis adhuc ætas ; tunc optimis assuescendum cùm ad quidvis cereum est ingenium.”

“ Le mariage est une chose très sérieuse ; On ne peut pas trop penser—heureux ceux qui en pense toute leur vie !”

CHEVELEY;

OR,

THE MAN OF HONOUR.

BY

LADY LYTTON BULWER.

Bernard Shaw (Wheeler) Bulwer-Lytton
Baroness Lytton
IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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ERRATA.—Page 244, line 25, for “toutes belles” read “toutes les belles.”—P. 336, l. 25, for
“chartereuse” read “chartreuse.”

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CHEVELEY;

OR,

THE MAN OF HONOUR.

CHAPTER I.

MILTON.

“ True enough ; your plotters bring many great changes into many whole families, and sometimes into several and distant countries, within the day ; and, what is more difficult and incredible, send off all parties well satisfied, except one scapegoat.”—*Walter Savage Landor's Imaginary Conversation between Andrew Marvel and Milton.*

“ I have often been puzzled to assign a cause, why women should have the talent of ready utterance, in so much greater perfection than men. I have sometimes fancied that they have not a retentive power, or the faculty of suppressing their thoughts, as men have, but that they are necessitated to speak everything they think ; and if so, it would perhaps furnish a very strong argument to the Cartesians for the supporting of their doctrine, that the soul always thinks. * * *

Nor must I omit the reason which Hudibras has given, why those who can talk on trifles, speak with the greatest fluency ; namely, that the tongue is like a race-horse which runs the

VOL. II.

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faster the less weight it carries. Which of these reasons soever may be looked upon as the most probable, I think the Irishman's thought was very natural, who, after some hours' conversation with a female orator, told her that he believed her tongue was very glad when she was asleep—for that it had not a moment's rest all the while she was awake."—*Addison*.

WE will for a short time leave Lord de Clifford and his party at Venice, preparing for Madame de A.'s masquerade, while we take a quiet stroll down the pleasant village of Blichingly, and see how fare matters there. For my own part, there is to me an indescribable charm in the calm, the quiet, the soft, the cultivated, and, above all, the home look of English scenery, which neither the gorgeous and Belshazzar-like splendour of the East, the balmy and Sybarite softness of the South, the wildness of the West, nor the frozen but mighty magnificence of the North, can obliterate or compensate for. England (the country, not the people) is merry England still. There is a youth about England that no other country possesses, not even the *new* world, for there the vast and hoary forests, the rushing and stupendous torrents — all seems like Nature's legends of immemorial time. It has been beautifully said, that "the world of a child's imagination is the creation of a far holier spell than hath been ever wrought by

the pride of learning or the inspiration of poetic fancy. Innocence that thinketh no evil; ignorance that apprehendeth none; hope that hath experienced no blight; love that suspecteth no guile;—these are its ministering angels,—these wield a wand of power, making this earth a paradise. Time, hard, rigid teacher—reality, rough stern reality—world, cold heartless world; that ever your sad experience, your sombre truths, your chilling cold, your withering sneers, should scare those gentle spirits from their holy temple,—and wherewith do you replace them? With caution, that repulseth confidence; with doubt, that repelleth love; with reason, that dispelleth illusion; with fear, that poisoneth enjoyment; in a word, with knowledge, that fatal fruit, the tasting whereof, at the first onset, cost us paradise. And the same almost may be said figuratively of English scenery; it has none of the might and majesty of maturity, none of the worn and rugged look of experience, none of the deep and passionate hues of adolescence; all its beauties are the cared for, watched over, cultivated, open, smiling, innocent, continually progressing, and budding beauties of childhood; the very mutability of its climate is a sort of childish alternation of smiles and tears; the repose of its

smooth and verdant lawns is like the soft and velvet cheek of a sleeping child ; the sweet and fairy-like perfume of its green lanes and hawthorn hedges is as the pure and balmy breath of childhood. “ England, with all thy faults,” and in all thy seasons, “ I love thee still.”

“ When Spring from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose,”

I like to hunt for those yellow cowslips, and those pale primroses, till I fancy earth has its stars as well as heaven ; but the year soon outgrows its infancy, and the innocent wild violets no longer child-like roll along the green ; for when

“ The bee goes round to tell the flowers ’tis May,”

then comes those stately nymphs, the blooming lilacs and the graceful acacias—“ waving their yellow hair ;” but they, like all beauties, alas ! have but their day ; and are succeeded by rich, blushing, pouting summer, making, with its roses and its cherries, every boy and girl sick for love of it. After which one feels more sober and sedate, and the golden harvests, and matronly housewifery of autumn, is more attractive ; but these too, with all earthly things, must pass away—the year, like man’s life, “ falls into the sear and yellow leaf,”

and for hoary winter's artificial fires, we must turn to the hearts and hearths of our own homes.

In calling Blichingly a village, I have done it wrong; though not quite a town, it was something more than a village: the French call those mule-like domiciles, between a house and a bandbox, *maisonnettes*, and I don't see why Blichingly should not be called a *townette*; for it had one street of unexceptionable red brick houses, with stone copings, brass knockers, and green balconies; in which street (High-street of course) flourished two rival hostelries; "The Good Woman" (most ungalantly represented by a headless female) and the "De Clifford Arms;" the two greyhounds in the supporters of which, punning apart, looked most doggedly at the aforesaid virtuous and inoffensive individual. Blichingly, moreover, boasted an excellent market-place; a library and a reading-room, known also by the appellation of "The Club;" duplicate grocers; ditto bakers; ditto butchers; ditto haberdashers; ditto saddlers; ditto tailors; ditto chandlers; ditto brewers; ditto printing-offices; ditto horseponds; in short, ditto everything but pumps and pounds; of which there were four of the former, and only one of the latter. These duplicates, immaterial as they may seem, were

of the uttermost importance: for at election times, when Triverton (the county town) was overflowing, party spirit might have run the risk of being smothered, did it not find vent by being extended to Blichingly; when, above all, the four pumps and the two horseponds were found extremely useful on the liberal side, being as great dampers to Toryism as the two hostelries were incentives to pure patriotism or Whiggism.—It was about four o'clock on a wet October day, the rain had suddenly ceased, and the sun was bursting forth in all its splendour, when Peter Nangle, the Blichingly postman, walked into the bar of the De Clifford Arms, and delivered a letter into the hands of mine host, honest John Stokes. “Humph,” said he, turning the letter in every direction without looking at the seal, which was neither more nor less than a fac-simile of his own sign, bearing Lord de Clifford’s arms;—“humph!—two and eightpence; why this here letter is from *forrin* parts. O so it is surely,” continued he, looking for the first time at the seal, and then added, calling to his wife, who was in an inner room, “Nancy, I say, Nancy, mark down two and eightpence postage to the old lady, will ee?”

“And who may be the old lady be? A near relation to the old gentleman, I ’spose,” said a

dark, cross-eyed, ill-favoured man, who sat by the fire smoking, and drinking hot brandy and water, while an old man, with a pale face and long white hair, was sitting silently and gloomily smoking on the other side.

“Ha! ha! ha!” laughed John Stokes as he desisted from his researches in a Rockingham tea-pot for a crooked sixpence, that he was anxious to transfer to the postman, “my eye, if she wor but to hear you, your feet might know the feel of the stocks again, Master Brindal, before you was much older.”

“Whew!” whistled the individual so addressed, who was no other than Richard Brindal, better known as Bring-em down Dick. “Whew!—then the relationship is clearly proved enough.”

“That is it,” said the hitherto silent old man, with a deep sigh, as he dashed his pipe violently from him into a thousand pieces, and walked hastily out of the house.

“How old Lee do take on,” resumed the ruffian, “about Mary’s misfortune; why, there’s plenty of lads to marry her yet. I should not mind doing it myself, if she warn’t growed so pale and so mopey looking, and if my Lord would come down with anything decent to support the child; but it’s not pleasant working for

other men's brats, even though they are great men's."

"Hush," said John Stokes, who had by this time spelt over Lord de Clifford's letter—"hush, don't go for to say nothink of the sort, for here's a letter from my Lord his self, who says as it aint hisen, and you may read it."

"Well, if he says *that*," said Brindal, "nobody can deny that he's his mother's own son; for that's a whopper that would choke a whale; but tip us the license," continued he, stooping to re-light his pipe at the bars of the fire, and stretching out his left hand behind his back for the letter, which ran as follows:

"Milan, September 28th, 18—.

"Stokes,—Have the goodness, upon the receipt of this, to find out who poor Mary Lee is to be married to. My mother (with that generosity for which she is so distinguished) having given or ordered Mr. Tymmons to give her a hundred pounds for her dower, out of compassion for the poor girl's insanity, which I understand has taken the turn of imagining me to be the father of her child. *I assure you, on the honour of a gentleman*, I know nothing whatever of the girl personally. I am sorry that old Lee and his sons should believe the ravings

of the poor maniac, as I must always feel grateful to them for their hitherto zealous exertions on my behalf at all the Triverton elections, for which reason no subsequent conduct of theirs can ever make me either privately or politically lose sight of their interests as my fellow countrymen. It has been hinted to me through private channels that Richard Brindal is the father of Mary Lee's child. I should be sorry to condemn him upon mere report; but could this be ascertained, I should feel it my duty, for the sake of morality, to make *him* marry her. Is he in the country at present? But my chief object in writing this is to tell you, whenever Mary Lee's marriage takes place, to provide the wedding dinner, &c. &c. &c., and put it to my account. Farmer Jenkins had better be invited, with the rest of the Rushworth people, to show that neither my mother nor myself bear them any ill-will. I hope Mrs. Stokes is well, and is getting her best blue ribbons ready, (which, by-the-bye, becomè her better than any others,) for they talk of a dissolution in spring.

“Your well-wisher,

“DE CLIFFORD.”

When Brindal had finished reading this mingled tissue of *truth* and generosity, he fairly

took the pipe out of his mouth, and laying it upon the hob, while he leisurely refolded the letter, at length burst into the following eloquent assertion :—" Well, if that arn't coming it pretty strong, I'm blowed if I know what is! but I wonder what chap is a going to marry Mary Lee ; for I've never *heer'd* on it. I shouldn't mind doing it myself, as I said afore, for that ere hundred pounds—I be so hard up just now."

" What ! and father the child and all ?" asked Stokes, looking slily from under his eyes.

" Wy, I don't know *exactly* what to say to that," said Brindal, scratching the back of his head, and thereby pushing his hat over his eyes, "'cause as how you see, Master Stokes,

" ' He as prigs what isn't hisen,
When he's cotched will go to prison,'

" Ha ! ha ! ha ! And not being pertickler, I'd rather *not* go, as the old lady said when the devil comed for her."

" La, Mr. Brindal," said Mrs. Stokes, who now emerged from the inner room, with a tray full of pickles that she had been tying up, " I should't a thought as you'd a minded going to

prison ; for as the cat's back said to the flea-bites, it's nothing when one's used to it !”

Now, though Mrs. Stokes was fat, fair, and forty, and moreover absolute in her own house, yet the very name of Bringem-down-Dick, like that of Rugantino erst of old in Venice, carried with it a vague terror that none cared to brave ; but whether it was that the very look of brandy inspires courage, and that Brindal was in the act of mixing a fourth tumbler of that exhilarating beverage as she entered, and that her eye fell upon it, or upon the long list of unpaid chalk scores to Mr. Brindal's account that graced the right hand side of the chimney-piece, or from “some strangercause still unexplored,” —but certain it is that Mrs. Stokes had never before ventured so much *of*, much less *to* Mr. Richard Brindal ; and it is equally certain that she had no sooner said it, than his dark sinister look made her bitterly repent her temerity. Already her imagination darted into futurity, and she felt herself minus several heads of poultry — her hams were unaccountably rusty — her gooseberry wine flat and tart — the ale at the De Clifford Arms forsaken (O horror of horrors !) for that of the Good Woman, and her best China bowls broken by some anonymous malefactor, against whom vengeance was impo-

tent. All this, and a great deal more, she felt would in some unaccountable manner be the inevitable result of her offending Richard Brindal; a presentiment which she was confirmed in, when he calmly and coolly replied, "Why, for that matter, Mrs. Stokes, do you see there be some things that one dislikes, jist because one is used to them. Now a woman's tongue, too pertly hung, is one of them; and for my part," continued he, pointing to the opposite sign, "I wish all sich was sarved like the young ooman in the picter there."

Poor Mrs. Stokes, bent upon repairing her first unlucky speech by the most obsequious civility and unoffendable good-humour, began with a benignant smile, though her blood was running cold all the while.

"Why, Mr. Brindal, that is no wonder, for——"

"No, it is no wonder," interrupted Brindal, "'cause as how it's only a sign as a woman is never good for anything till her head has parted company with her body."

There is no knowing whether Mrs. Stokes's dignity, temper, and sex could have stood this, or whether her husband might not have been obliged to come to the rescue, had not a red-headed maid-servant, in a crooked and

very dirty straw bonnet, with a face and hands to match, just entered with a cracked teacup, and a request to Mrs. Stokes that she would lend Miss Mac Screw a spoonful of vinegar.

“Well, if it ain’t too bad,” said Mrs. Stokes, jerking the cup out of the girl’s hand, “if it ain’t too bad that a lady, if lady she can be called, however, that a woman with one hundred thousand pounds in the three per cent. consols, should be sending to borrow every hand’s turn from a poor woman like me; it’s to be hoped she’ll remember me in her will for all the grains of pepper and salt, spoonfuls of mustard and tea, ends of candles, and parings of cheese, she has had from this house.”

The spoonful of vinegar having been given, and the red-headed Iris departed, Mrs. Stokes inveighed amain against stinginess in general, and Miss Mac Screw’s stinginess in particular, till John Stokes, who, from having formerly been a clerk in the Grand Junction Water-works, never could see anything likely to overflow, without instantly turning the current, observed, “he was surprised Mr. Herbert Grimstone had never made up to Miss Mac Screw, as he understood he kept a reg’lar register like of all the great fortins in the whole world; and he had many a time heard his

furrin valley say, when they was a staying up at the Park, that Mr. Herbert was none of your more nice nor wise gentlemen, for he'd marry the devil's grandmother (or, if he dared, his own mother, which was worse) for money !”

“ Ah, he shows his mother-wit then,” said Brindal, buttoning up his coat and shaking the ashes out of his pipe, as he prepared to leave the house. No sooner was he gone than Mrs. Stokes seated herself in the chair he had just vacated, and placing a hand upon each knee, said, as she looked wistfully at the beforementioned white score, “ I wish, John Stokes, you would make that ere good for nothink feller pay up what he owes.”

“ That's easier said than done, wife.”

“ Nonsense ! why can't you bring him to the *pint* at once ?”

“ 'Cause it's far easier to bring him to the quart, Nancy—ah ! ha ! ha !—than stop him at the pint.”

“ There you are again, always at your silly jokes ; but I tell yon what it is, Mr. Stokes, it's no joke to have such rum customers, and never see the sight of their money.”

“ My dear, he's not a rum customer, 'cause he never takes nothink but brandy.”

“ Flesh and blood can't stand it, John Stokes,

so it can't," said Mrs. Stokes, darting out of her chair, and reaching down a black cotton velvet bonnet from an opposite peg, which having placed upon her head, and adjusted at a small oval, blister-like looking glass that adorned the mantelpiece, she resumed, turning full upon her devoted lord, "And I tell you what it is too, Mr. Stokes, I won't stand it neither. Here am I slaving from daybreak to daybreak, pickling, preserving, mending, making, brewing, baking, serving the customers, making out the bills, larning the children, watching that no carriages change horses at the Good Woman, weeding the garden, and even baiting the rat-traps, while not a thing do you do from morning till night but laugh and joke, or drink with every one that comes in, or stand whistling at the door with your hands in your pockets, and go to bed at twelve, and never get up again till six the next morning; you great lazy, provoking, good-for-nothing, unaccountable, tyrannical, barbarous wretch you."

"Tyrannical, my dear, O—"

"Hold your tongue, do; I never can get in a word edgeways for your eternal jabber; gabble, gabble, gabble, you go all day long like a goose in a pound, instead of listening to anything that could be of service to you."

Here Mrs. Stokes's attention and speech were at one and the same moment interrupted, by observing a piece of feline delinquency that by no means contributed to assuage the indignant feelings she was already labouring under. A large tom-cat, who, during the commencement of his mistress's oration, had sat quietly within the bar, very demurely purifying his paws, suddenly espied upon an upper shelf a half-knit worsted stocking, with a ball of worsted appended thereto;—this was a temptation not to be resisted, for Tom, like many other gentlemen bred to the bar, delighted in that species of mischief which consists in the antithetical process of entangling and undoing other people's work; so having in an accidental upward gaze been attracted by the ball, he gave one quick, parting lick to his paws, another equally rapid circular one to his lips, and then vaulting nimbly upon his hind-legs, stretched forth his dexter fore-paw, till with one agile jerk he brought ball, stocking, needles, and all, to his own level. After the first nervous retrograde start at the *chevaux de frise* of pointed steel that seemed to aim directly at his eyes, he returned slowly and cautiously to the charge, till, emboldened by the now perfect passiveness of the needles, he began rapidly push-

ing the ball about with his paw in a most mace-like fashion, as though he had been playing billiards with his own shadow, till he at length succeeded in completely putting his foot in the stocking, and, not being able to extricate it at his pleasure, gave one loud, melancholy mew — seldom heard from out his noble breast, save when serenading some feline fair one on a neighbouring wall. This unusual sound it was that called Mrs. Stokes's attention to all the ruin grimalkin had wrought !

Now, gentle reader — for gentle at this moment I feel you are — for even though you should have just returned from St. Stephen's after ratting, still the perilous situation of poor puss must awaken all the gentleness in your nature ; — well, then, gentle reader, lacerate not your too susceptible heart with unnecessary fears for the safety of one who *played not wisely, but too well*. Luckily for Tom's personal security, Mrs. Stokes, like Monsieur Jourdin, who had been talking prose all his life without being in the least aware of the fact, was (equally unknown to herself) a profound metaphysician, and therefore in the habit of attributing and referring the most palpable and visible effects to the most impalpable and hidden causes ; consequently, in the present instance,

she gently approached the cat, and in the most dulcet tones her voice was capable of, apostrophised him as follows:—"Poor Tommy—pretty fellow—I'll get his paw out for him;" which having done, she darted across the room to where her all-enduring spouse was standing, and dragging him by that part of his left arm nearest the shoulder, seated him by main force upon a high clerk-like stool within the bar before the chaotic mazes of the stocking, upon which he gazed mildly and meditatively, awaiting his doom, which his better half soon pronounced.

"There, you great,* mischievous, idle, good-for-nothing feller; sit there till I come back, do; and roll up that worsted, and take up

* It may be satisfactory to the hypercritical reader (especially should he be a married man, and consequently too prone to impute blame to wives in general, and Mrs. Stokes in particular) to know that Mrs. Stokes, with true womanly devotion, and the hyperbole of wifely affection, overrated her husband in calling him great; he was, in reality, but four feet two by one foot nothing, while she was portly as Juno when she made the assignation with Ixion, but albeit (except her brow) most unlike her when she kept it. How much better and purer the social system would be, were there more wives like Mrs. Stokes and Juno, and more husbands like Mr. Stokes! but "*Diis aliter visum*," and as for Jupiter, the less said of him the better.

those stitches, and try and set to rights some of the mischief you have done."

"Me, my dear!" began Mr. Stokes, in a tone of well-founded astonishment, mingled with groundless contrition; "me, my dear!"

"Hold your tongue, do, John Stokes, you are enough to provoke a saint or a tea-totaller—so you are—with your eternal lies and excuses, let you do what you will; I could forgive all the harm you do, if you was not always a trying to defend yourself arterwards. None of the children do half the mischief you do."

"No, my dear, no one accuses them of it."

"What's that you say, Mr. Stokes?" inquired his wife, as she finished tying on her bonnet, which operation had prevented her hearing distinctly the remark her rash husband had hazarded.

"I say, my dear, that they are very good children indeed."

"Yes, I believe they are—thanks to me, Mr. Stokes; I should like to know what they'd be if they took after you."

"Not much the better, certainly, for there is little good to be got from second-hand abuse and ill usage, which is all they could take after

me, for that's all I have from morning till night."

This reply was uttered *sotta voce*, although Mrs. Stokes had retired into the inner room, from which she soon emerged, armed with a bottle of wine, a sallylunn, and a packet of tea, all of which she destined for Mary Lee, who was ill, and unable to provide such things for herself. Mrs. Stokes, to do her justice, was overflowing with the milk of human kindness to every one of God's creatures except the enduring little animal who now sat upon that high stool within that low bar, taking up the stitches of that stocking which the cat had dropped; but doubtless she thought, as he possessed the whole fountain from which that lactary stream emanated, there was no use in wasting upon him any of its outpourings.

Mrs. Stokes, having terminated her preparations by putting on her pattens, departed on her charitable visit to Mary Lee. Alas, poor human nature! why is it that your best and purest feelings, like virgin gold, are sure to be mixed with considerable alloy before they can pass current through this world? Mrs. Stokes had always been kind and attentive to Mary Lee, especially since what

the common people emphatically call her *misfortune*. Tea, soup, and white bread she had liberally supplied her with; but though she had long been weak and ill in the extreme, she had never yet got to wine; but Lord de Clifford's letter, and the mysterious rumour of her marriage, all roused Mrs. Stokes's curiosity beyond concert pitch; and though she could not have said *in vino veritas*, she felt that there was, and for the first time she suddenly recollected that a glass of wine would do Mary Lee all the good in the world. "It will warm her heart, poor thing, and open it too, perhaps; for though her wits wander, her tongue is very still," thought Mrs. Stokes, as she set out on her mission, turning to give one parting look of admonition to her husband, who no sooner knew her out of sight, and believed her out of hearing, than he began singing Burns' "Address to the Deil," which he had picked up from a Scotch pedlar, raising his voice, as was his wont, when he got to the second verse.

"Hear me, auld Hangie, for a wee,
An' let poor damned bodies be;
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
E'en to a deil,
To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me,
And hear us squeel!"

CHAPTER II.

“ It is a tale better, perhaps, untold—
A dark page in the history of mankind,
Which would be better wholly blotted out :
It grieves me much to speak of evil things,
Thou knowest—yet thou urgest me to speak.
Well, then, draw near and listen.”

M. S.

“ Was there ever seen such villany ?
So neatly plotted, and so well performed ?”

JEW OF MALTA.

MARY LEE, about three years before the present period of our history, had been the belle of the village. She was deservedly the pride of her father and brothers. Mother she had none. There was not a young man within ten miles round that was not, directly or indirectly, an admirer of hers ; and every matron in Blichingly cited her as a pattern of industry, goodness,

and filial affection; and although she bore off the palm of beauty triumphantly from all her village rivals, yet such were her unvarying sweetness of temper and active zeal to oblige, that there was not one amongst them who (even under that severest test of female friendship, the loss of an admirer on her account) could find it in their hearts either to envy or dislike her—two feelings, by-the-bye, which are generally synonymous in the human heart. Did any girl, more addicted to the culling of kingcups and the chasing of butterflies, desert the dull monotonies of hemming and sewing for green lanes and greener meadows, and so leave some task unfinished till the eleventh hour, when some angry grandam's or schoolmistress's just displeasure was to be dreaded, it was ever avoided by Mary Lee's goodnatured and prompt completion of the neglected work. Many a long-puzzled-over sum had she also cast up with a quickness and fractional correctness that might have excited the envy, while it compelled the admiration, of Mr. Joseph Hume; she was moreover *ecrivaine publique* to the whole hamlet; her garden boasted rarer and better cultivated flowers than any other cottage in Blichingly. No wonder, then, that her bees produced more honey than any

of her neighbours'; her poultry, too, had gained a well-merited reputation, which made it sought after by every housekeeper far and near; while her hens always laid sooner and later than any one else's; yet all of these was she ready to give, or to lend, as the occasion might require, to her less fortunate neighbours.

There is a sort of sanctifying halo in breathing an atmosphere of affection and good-will, that precludes all base and unworthy feelings; for the love of those by whom we are surrounded is a sort of moral sunshine, which expands and ripens the best germs in our nature; while to feel the blight of envy, hatred, contempt, malice, hypocrisy, or ill-will, makes us end by being in reality what we were at first falsely accused of being. It is the conviction that every man's heart is against us that sets our heart against every man. Poor Mary was basking in the full meridian of this moral sunshine, when, at a dance given by the dowager Lady de Clifford, at Blichingly Park, to all her tenants, after a harvest home, Lord de Clifford first beheld her dancing under an avenue of fine large Spanish chesnut trees, as he sat listlessly smoking in one of the library windows, too cold and too proud to join the rustic group and thaw himself in the sunshine

of happy faces. Equally surprised and riveted by Mary's bright and glowing face, and her fawnlike and unplebeian figure, he actually rose from his seat with an intention of joining the dancers, or rather, of becoming acquainted with her; but always dark, calculating, and designing, even under his strongest impulses, he checked himself, and turning to his amiable parent, as he pointed the amber mouthpiece of his pipe at her, inquired—

“ My dear ma'am, who is that very pretty girl in the white dress, and straw bonnet with blue ribbons, that is dancing with one of Lord Sudbury's gamekeepers ?”

Her ladyship advanced to the window, and after having levelled her glass at her for a few minutes, said—

“ O that, my dear, is Mary Lee, the carpenter and undertaker's daughter—a *vaustly* clever young woman—the best plain-worker in Blichingly, and so clever about poultry and a dairy, and all that sort of thing. I wanted her to live with me as my maid, but her father would not let her; *these here* petty tradespeople are so much above themselves now-a-days, and Mary is thought such a paragon of perfection in the village. But, my dear, you who used to be so *vaustly* gallant, I wonder you don't

go out and flirt with her ; though," added the virtuous and exemplary mother, with a sigh, " I suppose marriage has *spilt* you in this way, as well as every other."

" Why, my dear ma'am," replied her son, with a smile between a sneer and a muscular convulsion, " if she is such a paragon, I think I had better go to work more cautiously."

" Very just observation, my dear ; but you was always so *vaustly* clever. I never shall forget, when you was only four years old, the day you threw the glass of wine in your father's face after dinner, because, poor little dear, you was screaming for a whole pine-apple, and he, in his usual tyrannical way, ordered you up to the nursery !"

Lord de Clifford paid little attention to this oft-repeated anecdote, so illustrative of his father's tyranny and his mother's judgment and affection ; for the *vaustly* clever boy who had thrown the glass of wine in his father's face for reproving him, was the equally clever man who was now intent upon laying a plan how to ruin a poor girl, of whose innocent and happy existence he had been ignorant an hour before. If Lord de Clifford did possess a talent in the world, it was one he inherited from his amiable mother — that of at once

striking out upon the anvil of his imagination a dark and intricate plot, which would have cost any man, with a grain more feeling or more principle, half a life to organise. It would be a useless, as well as a disgusting task, to detail the minutiae of villany by which Lord de Clifford had effected poor Mary Lee's ruin. Suffice it to say, that by passing himself off for the son of a Norfolk farmer, and personating the character in the alternate fascinations of velveteen shooting-jackets, and blue coats and gilt buttons, he contrived to meet her everywhere—but in her father's house—for three months, and at the end of that time to get her to consent to a secret and, it is needless to add, a mock marriage. In vain poor Mary implored him to allow her to confide the secret to her father, even when, if she did not do so, her disgrace must become inevitable. Still he persisted that her doing so would ruin him with his father! And what misery, what ruin, what shame, will not the devotion of a woman's heart endure, to ward off a shadow of either from what she loves! And is man's return ever to be what it ever has been, insult, injury, and desertion? Ay, even so. When Mary Lee's child was born, in vain her poor heart-stricken father implored her only to let him know who was the

author of her disgrace ; in vain he promised pardon if she would : still was she inexorable, merely assuring him, with many bitter tears, that she was not disgraced, and that he should know all in good time.

Meanwhile Lord De Clifford, the soi-disant William Dale, grew less punctual at their trysting place, a green dell about three miles from old Lee's cottage, called the Fairies' Bath, from a rivulet that terminated in a little oval pond of crystal water, at the bottom of which the smooth pebbles were to be seen, looking round and white as daisies. On the summit of a rock rich in flowering shrubs, at the northern end of this dell, was the ruin of an old abbey, whose vaults were supposed to be the repository of the contraband treasures of a gang of smugglers, who, through the medium of their coadjutors, the gipsies, had them conveyed from a small sea-port, not fifteen miles distant. It was from the ruined aisle of this old abbey that Lord de Clifford was wont to announce his arrival to Mary, by throwing a stone into the little pond, as she stood beside it in the dell beneath. Three months (during a pretended absence of his into Norfolk) had now elapsed since they had met there. It was a beautiful summer evening. The sun was flooding the

glen, and pressing it to her purple west with farewell looks of golden light, the distant lowing of the cattle was the only sound to be heard save the dreamy humming of insects, for

“Life in its myriad form was on the wing,”

when Mary Lee, her child nestled in her bosom, and her heart beating high within it, once more repaired to the dell. She waited some time listening intensely for the well-known signal, till the very silence became audible from the painful acuteness of her own anxiety; but at length, instead of the accustomed stone, a heavy packet fell at her feet,—she opened it, and beheld ten sovereigns enclosed in a paper, on which were written these words:—

“Mary,—I cannot stay a moment, business of consequence prevents me; I send you ten pounds, for fear you should want money.

“Yours,

“WILLIAM DALE.”

Poor Mary's first impulse was rapidly to ascend the little winding path that led to the ruins, but she was startled back by hearing the loud quick echo of a horse's hoofs, galloping along the upper road; and each echo

seemed to rush through and trample on her heart. Again she looked on the few cold words contained in the letter she still held,—“ Business of consequence !” she repeated, “ what business could, what business ought to prevent him, for one moment only—for one moment from seeing me—from seeing his child—whom he has never yet seen ?—Money, why should he send me money ?—he never did so before, I don’t want money.”

Here poor Mary burst into a paroxysm of tears, which were only checked by the cries of her child, who was beginning to feel the increasing chillness of the air. “ Poor little thing !” said she, hushing it, “ no wonder you cry, you have cause to cry, when he would not stay even one moment to look upon you,—he who has never yet done so !” And at this reflection her tears flowed afresh : but as she retraced her steps homeward, she recollected she must suppress her affliction before her poor father, who was already sufficiently aggrieved on her account ; and then, with all the sophistry of a woman’s nature, which always endeavours to make excuses for what it loves, even when there are none to be made, she argued—“ He was busy, he was hurried, perhaps, and men are not like women, they never think of other people’s feelings when they are engaged or in a hurry. It was—it must be so, for

even were he neglectful of her, he could not but be anxious to see his child, whom he had never yet beheld."—So argued poor Mary, till false hope again filled the aching void that disappointment had left in her heart. But again she repaired to the dell, and this time she waited till past midnight, drenched with rain, and almost blinded with lightning; but he never came.

O what degrees there are in misery! This time she would have given all she possessed in the world to have had even such another cold letter as the last. Still, once again she went, it was the last time, at least to meet him; frantically, yet breathlessly, she clung to the shrubs that hung from the rock, as though their leaves had "voiceless words" that could tell her something she did not know, but longed yet dreaded to hear; her eyes strained upward to the old ruin, and one hand passionately straining back her fair and silken hair, that nothing might impede the faintest sound of his approach. In this state of painful suspense, if that can be called suspense which seems to realise our worst fears, she had waited above an hour, when a slight rustling was heard among the shrubs. "William! William!" almost screamed poor Mary; and "William!" echoed through the dell, as she sank at the foot of the

rock nearly lifeless; but no William was there. When she revived, a letter only was lying at her feet; she tore it open and read as follows:—

“ Woman, cease to persecute me; the fittest place for you is the House of Correction. As I suppose, your father, being a respectable man, will disown you when he knows that you are no more my wife than I am yours, I being, I am sorry to say, married already; and as for your brat, thanks to the New Poor Laws, you can have no claim upon me for that, especially after the ten sovereigns I sent you last week. There is no use in your attempting to follow me, for I shall have left the country before another hour. I hope this may be a warning to you not to be so forward another time to any future

“ WILLIAM DALE.”

This, then, was what she had watched, waited, hoped, feared, and suffered for in every possible shape! She did not scream, she did not swoon, she did not even shed a single tear: there she sat on that mossy stone, pale as marble, and as mute; the rock itself might have fallen upon her, she could not have felt it. Poor creature! she did not suffer; for reason,

that cruel beacon that points out all our woes, had left her, and there she might have remained had not Richard Brindal, while transacting some moonlight business in the old abbey for his friends the smugglers, towards midnight, had his attention attracted by something white.

Upon looking over the rock to see that no one lurked beneath, having taken the precaution to prime and load his gun, he descended noiselessly by the little winding path into the glen; and once there he cried out boldly to the figure beneath the rock, "Who goes there?" but receiving no answer to his third interrogation, he levelled his piece and was about to fire, when the moon, at that moment emerging from a cloud, discovered the form, or what he at that time thought the ghost, of Mary Lee? "Why, Mary," said he, going up to her, "how now, what brings thee here, child, in this lonely place, at this lonely hour? Go home, my partridge, man-traps are useless in such a place as this—ha! ha! ha!"—and the ruffian laughed till the still and solemn air returned an echo like a chorus of fiends; "go home, there's a good girl," continued he, pushing her with the butt-end of his gun, "your child will be wanting you, I'm thinking."

"Ah!" cried the poor maniac, pressing the

gun to her bosom, "poor baby, hush, hush, hush! or they will send us to the House of Correction, and they are all William Dales there; not my William, for they've killed him, but Williams that they keep to write those letters. Hush, hush! or they'll shower down upon us those letters made out of the rocks, till they kill us."

"Poor thing!" said Brindall, while symptoms of humanity actually glistened in his eyes, "if she ain't gone clean out of her reason: I must get her home as well as I can;" and fearing the gun might go off, he extricated it from her as gently as possible, and hiding it in some underwood, he took the unresisting girl in his arms and carried her out of the glen, when she followed him without again uttering a sound till she reached the door of her father's cottage, when the shrill bark of a little Scotch terrier from within seemed to rouse her into a temporary and painful consciousness; she stared wildly for a few moments at Brindal, and then placing her finger on her lip, said, "Hush, William, don't you speak, I'll tell my father all, and he'll be so glad to see you at last."

The wretched father, who had been anxiously waiting for his daughter's return, and wondering and fearing at her delay, now undid the door, little imagining the climax of misery that

awaited him. There stood Mary, totally unconscious of his presence: those eyes which that very morning had been soft and clear as heaven's own blue, now glared with the fearful fire of insanity; those cheeks, which a few hours before had been blushing and downy as the hues of a ripe peach on a sunny wall, were now white as ashes, save a burning spot in one of them, which looked as if it were consuming her.

"Master Lee," said Brindal, brushing away a tear with the back of his hand, "this is the worst night's work I ever did, to bring her back to you in this state, but still it was better than leaving her to die in the glen; don't ee say nothing to her, poor thing, don't ee, but get her quietly to bed."

Brindal's request was useless, for poor Lee could not speak. He drew the poor maniac to him; and as her head sank upon her shoulder, her hand relaxed its grasp of the fiend-like letter that had brought her to that state. Brindal caught it as it fell, and gave it to her father. "Mayhap," said he, "this may tell you more than I can about poor Mary."

It did indeed tell but too well what it was almost beyond the old man's power to bear. "Monster! demon! whoever you are!"

exclaimed he, grinding his teeth, and raising his clenched hand, with which he impotently struck the air—"but I will not curse you ; for there are no words strong enough to wrench curses from the depths of hell for deeds like these. No, no, I will not curse you," he continued, gently parting the hair off Mary's pale and vacant face ; "the reason that has left this poor beautiful innocent head—ay ! innocent despite ten thousand fiends—will rush to God, and plead for surer vengeance than a poor worm's like mine ; but that too the villain shall have, if he's above ground. Mary ! my poor Mary ! my best child ! and has it come to this ? Well, I was too proud of you, and it was right that I should be humbled ; but you, you were never proud ; and all things loved you well, even the bad and the wicked—yes, the wicked. And so the foul fiend grew jealous, and came in person to talk to you of love. Ha ! ha ! ha ! that is right ; work away, my brave boy, at his bridal jewel-box, and I will get the wedding shrouds ready."

This last sentence of the old man's raving was addressed to his son, who was working late in an inner room at a workhouse coffin. Every dull dense blow of the hammer fell like a doom amidst the silent idiocy of the unhappy girl, and the furious ravings of the

wretched father. Brindal, who had been leaning with his head and face against the wall, subdued, for the first time in his rugged and warring life, into more than feminine softness and infantine fear, actually shook like a leaf, as he now noiselessly opened the door of the inner room, where George Lee was at work, and requested him to desist from his occupation. "Why?" inquired the young man. A choking sensation in his throat prevented Brindal from replying; but pointing to the outer room, he again buried his face in his folded arms against the wall, and, for the first and the last time in his life, sobbed like a child.

It is needless to describe the renewed misery that ensued when young Lee joined his wretched sister, and still more wretched father. The former he silently carried to bed, from which she did not rise till many months afterwards. Old Lee and his son that very night left their home in quest of the soi-disant William Dale, and for many months was their fruitless search continued; and both father and son, who had hitherto seldom or never been known to enter a public-house, now spent their whole time from one to another, within fifteen miles round, not indeed drinking, for, beyond an occasional pipe, nothing passed their lips; but the espionage of the French police, under

the ancien régime, never exceeded the vigilant and minute scrutiny with which they possessed themselves of every fact relative to the identity and locality of each new individual that they encountered, in the vain hope of at last lighting upon William Dale ; but without any other result than that of their business declining, and the daily decreasing comforts of their now desolate home. The little garden, once so neat and blooming, was a wilderness of weeds, in which every stray half-starved horse or donkey grazed, and the poultry-yard contained little save the skeleton pinions of its former inmates, left from the superfluities of some carrion crow, with an old hen or two, with drooping feathers and cramped limbs, fain to support themselves on one solitary leg, while the gates were broken and off their hinges. The interior of the cottage had, if possible, undergone a greater change, still kept perfectly clean by the maid, who minded poor Mary, and nursed her child. Yet all around wore the coldness and stillness of death ; for there is a mysterious sympathy in inanimate things, especially those household and familiar ones, that seems to sadden with our sadness, and grieve with our grief. It may be but fancy ; but on leaving a place for ever that has been our home, I have always thought

that the chairs and tables looked less bright, and more solemn and fixed than was their wont; but in poor Lee's cottage this was fact, not fancy. The Dutch clock, with its parterre of peonies and eglantines, no longer preached its hourly sermon of admonitory ticks. It had been stopped, for its noise seemed to rouse Mary into a sort of vague but torturing consciousness of those gone-by hours, when she used to watch its hands with such anxiety. The cheerful flower-pots no longer graced the windows. The old china and strings of birds' eggs were dimmer and more dusty than of yore. The birdcages were now empty. Old Lee still took in the Penny Magazine; but the leaves remained uncut among the three or four dozen of books that rested upon a piece of green baize on the top of an old walnut-tree chest of drawers. The old brazen-clasped Bible was the only one, with the exception of an odd volume of Burns, now ever opened by him. Amid coloured prints of the Last Supper, Moses in the Bulrushes, and Death and the Lady, hung the chef-d'œuvre of poor Mary's industry, a sampler, commencing with the following hymn, and terminating in a parrot, of a plumage so heterogeneous that it would have puzzled the best ornithologist extant.

“ God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform ;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

“ Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

“ Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take ;
The clouds ye so much dread,
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

“ Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace :
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.”

Often might poor Mary be seen with her mild but vacant eyes fixed on these words, and often would she hush the cries of her child by mechanically pointing to their bright colours. Deserted by all her former companions, (for not an ugly girl in the village but crossed over to the opposite side of the way, as if afraid of contamination, when they had occasion to pass Lee's cottage,) none ever obtruded on her solitude, save the charitable Mrs. Stokes, and Madge Brindal, a gipsy sister of Richard's, who used to play with her child for hours, and

weave vague prophecies of love and vengeance, to try and rouse her from the state of torpor in which she was sunk ; and sometimes Madge, with her wild dark eyes and mysterious voice, succeeded but too well ; and the calm and passive idiot swelled and foamed into the uncontrolled and uncontrollable maniac. These paroxysms were always succeeded by such a state of physical weakness, that little hope seemed to remain of her life : but there is a vitality in madness that seems to set all corporeal laws at defiance, and Mary recovered, to feel and to suffer. Are they not, at least with a woman, synonymous ? Her eldest brother was apprenticed to a shoemaker in London, with strict injunctions from his father, night and day, to prosecute his inquiries about William Dale.

Old Lee and his second son, when they did meet beneath their own roof at work or at meals, like Trappists, exchanged but one sentence, which was invariably the same, namely, “ Well, have you heard any tidings of him ? ” and the negative that ensued was followed by total silence. At the end of a year, poor Mary partially recovered her senses, but the profound melancholy that succeeded was even more heart-rending to all, save the wretched father, who felt as grateful for his child’s recovered

reason as though she had been restored to him from the dead. With that delicacy of tact which genuine feeling always inspires, neither he nor her brother ever alluded to the past, nor did Mary; but whenever the former took her child upon his knee, the blood would rush into her cheeks, and the tears into her eyes, and she would hurry away to the mechanical performance of some household work, or effort to achieve some long missing comfort for the poor old man. Mary longed to know more of her own history than she could remember: every time she read that fatal and brutal letter, (which, with the cunning of insanity, she had contrived to secure and secrete,) her brain seemed to stereotype the words in fire. And this told her own individual history but too plainly: her only unsolved wonder was, how her father had become acquainted with it, and how he had borne it; and of this Madge Brindal by degrees informed her. As she recovered sufficiently again to employ herself, the benevolent Mrs. Stokes, feeling for her deplorable situation, and the decreasing comforts of her once happy, and, for her sphere of life, affluent home, busied herself in obtaining plain work for her. It was about fifteen months after the events recorded at the commencement of this

chapter, that Lord and Lady de Clifford, having come down to Blichingly for the shooting season, Mrs. Stokes made interest with Lady de Clifford's maid to employ Mary as a sempstress; which she did, by giving her some frocks to make for little Julia. About seven o'clock of a fine September evening, Mary, having completed her work, put on a deep close bonnet, and taking a back way though the fields, repaired with it to the Park. On arriving there, Mrs. Frump politely requested she would rest herself in the housekeeper's room, although such hospitality was expressly contrary to her mistress's commands, from the circumstance of she herself being in the habit of paying frequent and impromptu visits to that domestic head-quarters. Mary, however, declined this contraband and perilous invitation, and requested to be shown immediately into the presence of Lady de Clifford's maid, with whom her business was. Frump having rung the bell, and desired a housemaid to conduct her up stairs to Berryl's work-room, she ascended the back-stairs as noiselessly and quickly as possible. In crossing the music gallery, as she was turning into the corridor, where the bedrooms were situated, her shawl was caught by the sharp corner of a pedestal;

in turning to disengage it, she beheld a bust of Lord de Clifford. It was with the greatest possible effort that she prevented herself from uttering a scream. At this sudden apparition of those features so deeply and fatally engraven upon her memory, she was on the point of asking the housemaid whose bust it was; but poor Mary had long felt as if the very sound of her own voice was to publish her shame, and the wish died away unspoken. "Come in," said Berryl, in reply to the housemaid's knock. "A young woman from the village, ma'am," said the latter, ushering in Mary, "who has brought home Miss Grimstone's frocks."

"O you are very punctual, I must say," said Berryl, patronisingly, as she placed a half-finished cap she was making on a block before her, "very punctual indeed; and the work is very neat; extremely so," continued she, scrutinising the tucks. "Do you think you would be able to braid a velvet frock, a *vilet* velvet with narrow gold Russian braid, for my young lady, against the beginning of next week?"

"I'll try, ma'am," said Mary, modestly.

"Well, I'll hexplain to you how it is to be done," said Berryl, opening the drawer of a wardrobe, and taking out the velvet: "the

lapels is to be"—so far had she got in her directions, when a loud voice was heard calling, "Berryl, Berryl."

"Coming, my lord, directly," cried she, throwing down the velvet with a gesture of impatience. At the sound of that voice a shudder and a faintness came over Mary Lee. Berryl prepared to leave the room, but, before she could do so, the door opened, and Lord de Clifford, in his shooting-jacket and shoes, his gun under his arm, and a slip of paper in his hand, flung open the door. "Berryl!" said he, not perceiving Mary, who stood in the shadow of the wardrobe, her heart standing still as she tried to catch every sound of that voice, that seemed like a fiery serpent to be hissing through her brain; while Lord de Clifford's back being turned to her as he spoke to Berryl at the door, she could not at first distinguish his face.

"Berryl, Carlton is going to town this evening; send this by him to Howel and James's, and write yourself, besides, telling them exactly the faults in the collars of the last shirts—they want more cutting out in the joining, or something; and put down the name of the satin you say I like for neckcloths—here, here's my list," and as he spoke he held it out to her;

but before she could take it, Mary sprang forward and seized it, exclaiming, with a loud shriek and wild hysterical laugh, as she grasped Lord de Clifford's arm tightly,—“ So, William Dale, William Dale, I have found you at last ; —father, I have found him !—George, I have found him !—him, the real William—not the one who wanted to send me to the House of Correction. No, no ! he has been properly punished, they have turned him to stone, and he stands in a corner of this house, looking so cold, and so ghastly, and so grand, but so terrible ! His eyes look like petrified curses, but indeed I did not curse him. No, no, I did not—but that letter did, and here is another just like it, the same writing exactly, but the words won't stand still for me to read them. 'There, there,'” continued she, plunging it in her bosom—“ there, I'll hide it, for fear they should turn you to stone with it, as they did the other William ; but he was false, and cruel, and deserved it. Let us go, William—let us go,—don't stay here—the very air feels unkind in this place. We will go to the dell—there are fairies there, and they all know us, and we'll dance with them in the moonlight. Madge told me I should be revenged ; and will it not be a fine revenge to bury that stone William Dale in the

Fairies' Bath? and when he cries to be taken out, the other little white round stones will mock and laugh at him, and tell him not to persecute them, but to go to the House of Correction—ha! ha! ha!

“D——n it, what the d——l brought her here?” said Lord de Clifford, frowning fearfully, and endeavouring to shake off the poor wretched girl; but madness was stronger than brute force, and she did not relax her grasp.

“Poor thing!” said Berryl, compassionately. “you must excuse her, my lord, she is subject to fits of insanity; for hers is a sad story,—your lordship may have heard it perhaps. She is daughter to the most respectable man in all the village, old Lee the carpenter. She has been cruelly used and deserted by some villain, about a year and a half ago, and she has never been in her right mind since.”

“And what the deuce was she doing up here?” asked Lord de Clifford angrily, without evincing the slightest compunction for the scene of wretchedness before him.

“Why, being very poor, I gave her some frocks to make for Miss Grimstone, and she brought them home, my lord, this evening.”

“I really think you might have found a

person of less equivocal character to work for my daughter ; but get her some water, for I believe she is fainting."

Poor Mary's head had indeed sunk exhausted upon the shoulder of her brutal and unfeeling destroyer. Berryl walked over to the washingslab, and filled out a glass of water, but Lord de Clifford's object being to get her out of the way, in order to try and intimidate Mary into going quietly home, he changed his genuine inhumanity into his mother's ever diplomatically successful *suaviter in modo fortiter in re* line of conduct, and when Berryl brought the water, he said in a pitying tone, "Poor girl! she seems so very weak, that I think wine would be better for her; go down and ask for some claret."

As Berryl closed the door, she could not help muttering to herself—"Well, I do declare it was too bad to talk about poor Mary's character when she was lying quite mad, and nearly dead, before him; but then there sort of profligate men, as every one knows he is, is so severe on us women; but it always was so, even in the Bible, for how wicked and spiteful Amnon was against Tamar; while no one ever heard of Joseph's saying a bad word of Mrs. Potiphar, though she richly deserved it; but men who behave themselves properly, never speak ill of the women."

No sooner had Berryl gone, than Lord de Clifford shook Mary rudely, and, calling her by the most opprobrious names, threatened to give her in charge to a constable, if she did not instantly leave the house. This roused the poor girl into a sort of half reason, that filled her with a bitter and burning hatred of her cruel and fiend-like betrayer. "Know, woman, whom you are speaking to," cried he; "I am not William Dale that you rave about, I am Lord de Clifford, son to the owner of these broad lands, upon which you and your family are poor mean serfs."

Wounded pride is a necromancer that converts the strongest love into the strongest and most implacable hate; let no man therefore be surprised, when he has sharpened a woman's heart upon the whetstone of insult, if it becomes a two-edged sword, and is pointed against himself. Mary Lee seemed changed as if by a magician's wand on the instant; no longer (even in madness) the soft, the gentle, the affectionate, the enduring, the forgiving victim. Reason seemed to have returned to her, as a gigantic and mighty weapon. She drew herself up to her full height, scorn quivered in her lip, hatred curdled her cheek, vengeance burned and lightened in her eyes:

there she stood like an embodied curse, as if her very breath had power to wither her betrayer; even he trembled beneath the loud, relentless, deliberate tone in which she spoke; every word that fell upon his ear seemed like a prophecy impelled by its own force to its own fulfilment. As William Dale, Mary still hoped, and therefore could have forgiven; but in the conviction that her seducer was Lord de Clifford, she felt the premeditation of the insult, the hopelessness, the irreparableness of the injury.

“ You are Lord de Clifford,” said she, slowly and distinctly, as she folded her arms and measured him with a scornful look from head to foot; “ then listen to what you are. You are in your own opinion a great lord—in that of the world, your own great world, a pompous, proud, disagreeable man—in that of the poor, a sordid, avaricious tyrant, who promises great things in his speeches at elections, and does mean ones to every one sufficiently humble to allow him to do so with impunity—and in mine, you are a cold, selfish, remorseless villain, whose dark deeds (despite this world’s might, which is always right) will yet, and that at no far distant time, work out their own punishment.”

Luckily for herself, during this scene Lady de Clifford was below stairs, in the billiard-room, rolling about the balls to amuse her little girl; but the Dowager being in her own room, which was opposite to the one in which Berryl worked, was startled by the loud excited tone of Mary's voice: she opened her door, and crossed the corridor, just as Berryl returned with the wine, and following her into the room, said to her son, by way of an apology for her intrusion, "My dear, it's nearly eight o'clock; ain't you dressed for dinner yet?"

"O my dear ma'am," said he, in a tone of bland compassion, got up to suit poor Mary's restored reason, and its probable consequences—"here is a terrible business—this is poor Mary Lee that I have often heard you mention. Poor girl! her madness has now taken the turn of identifying me, or rather confounding my identity with that of William Dale, her seducer."

This amiable parent knew pretty well the real truth of the case, for her sons placed such unbounded confidence in her in some things, that they seldom or ever concealed any of their peccadillos from her; mothers of narrower and more fastidious minds might have felt insulted at this; but she, with juster and

more liberal views, attributed it entirely to their unbounded affection for her : knowing, therefore, how matters really stood in the present instance, she merely replied—

“ *Vaustly* impertinent, though, of her madness presuming to take such a turn ! Very odd, Lady de Clifford’s maid employing such a person ; that’s one reason I do hate having other people’s servants in the house, they take such liberties, and breed such confusion : very remiss in Frump never having told me of it till ten minutes ago, or I certainly should have made Mr. Tymmons warn her off the premises as she came through the park, for I’ll have no such hussies coming here.”

“ O, my dear mother,” interposed her son, still more amiably than before, “ poor thing ! she appears more to be pitied than blamed.”

“ I’m sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *hort* to say so, and gentlemen, I know, are not so particular about these things as ladies, but you must allow it is very unpleasant to have such people brought into one’s house.”

“ She will soon be out of it, my lady,” said Berryl, darting a look of indignation at her ; “ for I sent for her father, when I was down stairs, to take her home, poor thing !”

Footsteps being now heard, her ladyship also thought fit to assume a bland tone, and turning to Mary, said, "My good girl, now do go home — one of the servants shall go with you ; you see it's all a mistake ; this gentleman is Lord de Clifford, my son, and we know nothing at all about *this here* William Dale that you've been a talking about."

Mary neither spoke nor moved, but surveyed the old lady's withered and hypocritical visage with ineffable contempt. At any other time, both mother and son would have resented such conduct in a very summary and arbitrary manner ; but, as the artificers of her ruin, they were in her power, and they felt it,—to say nothing of vulgar spurious pride like theirs being always mortgaged with a counterpoise of meanness and cowardice. A telegraphic look now passed between them, upon which her ladyship advanced, and affectionately placed her hand upon Mary's arm ; but the poor "low-born serf" started at the touch, and shook her off as though a serpent had stung her.

"Poor thing !" resumed the ancient dissembler, in a tone of counterfeit feeling that a Jesuit might have envied—"poor thing, it is easy to see how her wits wander."

"So much so," said Mary, in a tone of

withering scorn, "that had I not known you by repute these eighteen years, I might almost believe, from your manner now, that you had some touch of human feeling."

"'Pon my word, this is too inso——."

"My dearest mother," interrupted her amiable son, (for a knock was now heard at the door,) "you must make allowances for insanity." This last word was uttered at the top of his voice as he added, "Come in," to the person at the door, and a footman entered, saying, "Lee the carpenter is in the passage, my lord."

"Tell him to come in."

The old man entered with a pale and agitated face. "Servant, my lady—servant, my lord; I fear my poor girl, from her dreadful affliction, may have frightened you," said he, walking kindly up to Mary, who held out her hand to him.

"Make no apologies, my good fellow," dulcified Lord de Clifford, adding, as he turned up his eyes, "madness is indeed an awful dispensation of Providence."

"Father," said Mary, solemnly, as she walked resolutely into the midst of the assembled group, which now only consisted of her father, Lord de Clifford, and his mother, who, with

her usual prudence, had desired Berryl to leave the room—"father, I am not mad; I have been mad, and I may be so again, but I am not mad now, and the man you have sought night and day, that you have watched for early and late, that you have left all things to seek, till all things have left you — that man now stands before you! that man is not William Dale, but Lord de Clifford!"

The old man turned from what he thought the distempered ravings of his afflicted child, with a look of hopeless wretchedness, to the author of it all, who pityingly shrugged his shoulders, and sighed out, "Poor thing!"

Again Mary repeated more solemnly and collectedly than before, "I am not mad, father; under the assumed name of William Dale, and in the pretended guise of a farmer's son, that man wrought your temporal and my eternal ruin;—before you he affects to pity me, but when I was alone with him, not half an hour ago, there was no threat, however mean and brutal, he did not use towards me. You still think I rave—look at his features, and look at my child's; that child has, as you know, the mark of a strawberry on the right side of his throat—so has that man, and I challenge him to show it—I dare him to deny it."

“ Do, my lord, have the goodness to humour her, by showing her that you have no strawberry on your throat,” asked old Lee, imploringly ; but both mother and son now lost their temper at being driven as it were into a corner, from which they could see no chance of escape, except by bullying and bravado.

“ Really, ’pon my soul, this is going a little too far, my friend,” said Lord de Clifford. “ There’s no knowing what lengths your daughter’s insanity may reach next, and I really cannot comply with any proposition so absurd.”

The poor carpenter looked at the great man with somewhat of the contempt that his daughter had previously bestowed upon him ; and this refusal on his part did more to convince Lee of Mary’s sanity than anything she could have done or said.

“ No, depend upon it, he will not show it,” resumed Mary, calmly ; “ but there is something that I will and can show, that may convince you that William Dale and Lord de Clifford are one and the same person ;” and as she spoke, she drew from her pocket the letter-case, out of which she took the letter addressed to her by William Dale, and taking from her bosom the list Lord de Clifford had written out and signed for Howell and James, she handed them to her father, saying—

“ Compare these two hands as minutely as you will, and you’ll find the one an exact copy of the other.” As Lee received them, the dowager, being through passion thrown completely off her guard, made a snatch at them, but he held them tightly over his head.

“ Your ladyship must excuse me,” said he ; “ you, I am inclined to think, need no proofs of your son’s guilt—I do ; to me they may be useful,”—and so saying, he walked to the window and compared the two writings, which were indeed fac-similes. When the examination was over, the old man groaned aloud, and walking up to Mary, drew her arm within his own. “ Poor child !” said he, “ let us leave this accursed house.”

“ You,” said he, as he passed Lord de Clifford, who stood with his arms folded, his lips compressed, his nostrils dilating, and his eyes glaring like a demon—“ you are a rich and a great man, I am a poor and a lowly one, but there is the same God in heaven for us both, and we shall meet again.”

“ I’m sure, my dear,” said his virtuous and exemplary parent, as the old man closed the door, “ I hope this will be a lesson to you never again to have anything to say to those sort of low girls, but keep more among your

equals in all these here *affaires de cur* ! for you see, my dear, what insolence it subjects you to."

Mary Lee from that day was an altered being ; though her reason wandered occasionally, yet it was but for short intervals, and those "few and far between." She seemed as though, from a mighty effort within herself, to retain it against its will, so as to gratify the burning and unquenchable thirst for vengeance that now consumed her ; but to strangers, and even to her chief friend and counsellor Madge Brindal, she often assumed a degree of imbecility that was far from real, in furtherance of her designs, which were, never to lose sight of Lord de Clifford's plans as far as she could ascertain them, in the hope of achieving that vague and shadowy revenge which, matured as it was by Madge's mysterious prophecies, became a part and attribute of her existence. And Lord de Clifford ! what change did this dark episode make in his existence ? None, save that of determining him to go abroad a little sooner than he otherwise might have done, and leaving Blichingly immediately. What other change could it make ? for no one knew poor Mary Lee, and every one knew Lord de Clifford—a Mecænas, in his way, a spawner of Whig pamphlets, and a crack political writer

in the "Edinburgh;" he crammed newspaper editors with good dinners, and they crammed him with praise; he figured in paragraph after paragraph as "that enlightened and patriotic nobleman, whose liberal policy and just views had triumphed over the accident of birth and the prejudice of station, and who, to his eternal honour be it spoken, had taught the people that all greatness, all freedom, all justice, and all morals! must emanate from themselves!"

With regard to his personal and individual code, when his vices did not interfere more actively, his was that philosophy of indolence which the epicurean Roman taught, and which looks upon life only as a visionary pageant, and death as the deep sleep that succeeds the dream. Such philosophy, "falsely so called," ever has been, and ever will be, destructive of all pure and lofty feelings—an antidote to all that is ennobling and good—a plague-spot, dark, pestilent, and all-corrupting, in the soul of that man who harbours it. And did the image of poor Mary Lee, a wreck in mind, body, and soul, never overshadow his pleasures, or shake his ambition? It has been ascertained that there is iron enough in the blood of forty-two men to make a ploughshare weighing about twenty-four pounds: Lord de Clifford had

reversed the order of nature in this, as in most other things—he had iron enough in his single composition to have made forty-two plough-shares.

CHAPTER III.

“ If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge.
 He hath disgraced me, and hindered me—laughed
 At my losses * * * *
 Cooled my friends, heated mine enemies.”

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

“ A tale of human power—despair not—list and learn !
 I looked, and lo ! one stood forth eloquently !
 The eyes were dark and deep, and the clear brow
 Which shadow'd them was like the morning sky,
 The cloudless heaven of spring, when in their flow
 Through the light air the soft winds as they blow
 Wake the green world ;—her gestures did obey
 The ocular mind that made the features glow.”

* * * * *

P. B. SHELLEY.

“ What, returned, captain !”

SCHILLER'S ROBBERS.

WHEN Mrs. Stokes reached Mary Lee's cottage it was almost dark, for the clouds had again gathered in black masses, and predicted

an impending storm. She hurried up the little wilderness of a garden, and finding the door shut, tapped at the window ; but receiving no answer, she tried to raise the latch of the door, which, however, resisted her efforts, being locked from within.

“ Dear me, how provoking ! ” said Mrs. Stokes, as large drops of rain began to fall, and a loud peal of thunder rolled above her as though it would rend the heavens ; “ they cannot be all out, surely ? Bless me, how it lightens ! ” and Mrs. Stokes placed her hand before her eyes, and hurried round to the back of the house, to seek admittance there ; but the thunder grew louder and louder, and her appeals for admittance were either unheard or unheeded. “ How very tiresome ! ” reiterated Mrs. Stokes ; “ I shall be drowned. I’ll try and get in at the window of Lee’s work-room.” So saying, she walked up to it, but stood transfixed to the spot at the scene she beheld within.

In the large old chimney blazed a wood-fire, on which was placed a tripod, surmounted by a large black iron pot ; in one corner of the ample chimney stood a bundle of green fagots ; in the opposite one was a cradle, in which slept a rosy-cheeked child of about three years old, unconscious alike of the scene within and the

storm without ; while on the top of the cradle, like a tutelary saint, sat a large black cat, with one white ring round her tail, the tail itself being curled round her paws, while she was luxuriating in that dignified and perpendicular sleep, which only cats, dogs, and somnambulists enjoy. At one side of the cradle, in fearful proximity to the fire, (unless his paws were insured,) lay a mosaic of sleeping, watching, and waking, in the person of little Wasp, the Scotch terrier. Two vacant high-backed chairs were at either side of the fireplace on the outside of the chimney ; in the seat of one of them was a very dirty pack of cards, a pewter soup-plate full of a dark-looking fluid, a cut lemon, and a raw pigeon, with the entrails taken out ; on the back of the other chair hung a gipsy hat and a red cloak, and in the seat of it was a pair of thick but small shoes, with very large silver buckles ; round the whitewashed walls of the room glittered and gleamed, like death's armoury, various sized leaden coffin-plates and handles ; against the wall opposite the window, on a large deal work-board, was a large-sized but lidless coffin, apparently just finished ; the floor was covered with shavings and carpenters' tools—all, save a circle, in the centre of which were marked and chalked out several

rectangular lines ; within this circle stood Mary Lee and Madge Brindal, the former in the black dress and Quaker-like cap she always wore ; her fair hair parted on her high, clear forehead ; her cheeks colourless, but still with that sort of pale bloom that is seen in a Provence rose ; her mouth was the only citadel that health had not deserted—it was full and rich as ever ; the beautifully curved, short, upper lip, gently parted, like a twin cherry, from the red pouting under one ;—yes, health still seemed as though it clung to

—— “ Those yet cool lips to share,
The last pure life that linger’d there.”

Her small, white, and almost shadowy hands were crossed upon her bosom, as she peered into the mysterious depths of her companion’s wild prophetic eyes, as though time and eternity were to be read within them. Through the almost Ethiopian darkness of Madge Brindal’s cheek was a rich red glow, like that of fire against a midnight sky ; her profile was chiselled in the most perfect Greek outline ; the mouth was handsome, but somewhat sensual,—but then the teeth within it were so pearl-like and costly, that no wonder it seemed a little epicurean ; her eyes were large, dark, and lustrous in the

extreme, and would have been fierce, but that they were curtained with lashes, so long and so soft, that they almost made one sleepy to look at them; the brows above them were low, straight, and intellectual; her hair, which was of that purple black seldom seen but on a raven's wing, was braided back beneath a red handkerchief, put on much after the fashion of an elderly Roman Contadina; not much above the middle size, her full and voluptuous figure might have been heavy, had it been less perfectly moulded. She wore a short green, glazed, stuff petticoat, with a short bedgown of bright red striped calico, the sleeves of which were now turned up, displaying a beautifully rounded arm, singularly white compared to her hands, which were brown, and rather coarse—this being rendered the more apparent by being covered with very showy but trumpery looking gold and silver rings, glittering with coloured stones; on her feet were bright blue worsted stockings, without shoes; and just before them was placed a small brazier, from which issued a thick, dense smoke, as ever and anon Madge threw into it with her left hand some mystic powder, while with her right she waved over it a green cypress branch, repeating at the same time some low, unintelligible words.

Such was the picture that presented itself to the astounded and disconsolate Mrs. Stokes, as she peered in through a hole in the window-shutter, the fire light blazing before her, and the lightning flashing behind ; while the wind whistled, and the hail-stones rattled against the windows, like dice in a dice-box. “ The Lord have mercy upon me ! ” cried she, her knees trembling, and her teeth chattering a second to the contralto of the hail. “ What in the name of wickedness are they about ? I shall never be able to make them hear me, for the noise of this terrible storm. If John Stokes had been a man—but then every one knows he isn’t—he’d have come with me, and not have let me come out alone such an evening as this.”

Now it is evident that Mrs. Stokes’s metaphysical and logical perspicuity must have been completely uprooted by the storm ; and that she was incapable of reasoning categorically, or she must have remembered that Tommy and her own orders (and which had the most weight in her menage, it would have puzzled Archimedes and all his successors to decide) were the sole causes of Mr. Stokes not having braved the storm without as well as that within. Scarcely had Mrs. Stokes uttered this zoological assertion with regard to her husband, when a peal of

thunder and a flash of lightning, more awful than the last, seemed to threaten her with instant deafness and blindness ; but “ fiat justitia, ruat cœlum.” So Mrs. Stokes, at that very moment, bethought herself, that being as deficient in ubiquity as in most other talents, her sposo could not at one and the same moment be taking up the stitches the cat had dropped, and holding that itinerant waterspout, ’ycleped an umbrella, over her head ; therefore, with a candour and recantation of error peculiar to great minds, she added a protocol to her last sentence of—“ Oh ! I forgot.” Again Mrs. Stokes approached the aperture in the shutter, and gazed upon the scene within, when to her horror she beheld upon the whitened wall of the room the phantasmagoria of a horse galloping down a precipice ; a man thrown from it, and a red stream flowing from him. The face she could not distinguish, as it was upon it that he had fallen. The smoke now rose from the brazier in such dense masses, while Madge continued to repeat her incantations over it, that the whole phantom became obscured by it ; and when at length it was succeeded by a clear blue lambent flame, the plain wall became visible and colourless as before, while the lurid flame played upon Mary’s pale fixed features and un-

earthly looking eyes, leaving her as like a shade, to all appearance, as the one she had just witnessed. Madge stood gazing inquiringly into her face, while she held the cypress branch triumphantly above her head, pointed at the wall. This she continued to do for a few seconds, and then let it drop into the lidless coffin.

Mrs. Stokes could bear no more. Her teeth chattered, her head reeled. She with difficulty supported herself against the wall, as she muttered—"The Lord have mercy upon me ! If they ain't a raising the devil, or doing something worse ! Poor Mary, to be sure, she has no reason left to know better ; but that witch of Endor, Madge Brindal, deserves to be dragged through a horse-pond for such diabolical doings, and I'll break open the door and tell her so."

Here Mrs. Stokes suited the action to the word, and vigorously pushed her by no means slight person against the door, which shook beneath, without yielding to the attack. She was preparing to return to the charge, when the remembrance of the mysterious evil wrought by Richard Brindal (aided, no doubt, by his sister's necromancy) on all to whom he owed a grudge, checked her, and she resolved not to interfere

in what evidently did not concern her, but go quietly round to the other side, and again try if she could not effect an entrance at the front door.

With this prudent resolve, Mrs. Stokes walked, or rather swam, into the front garden, where the wind was less violent than at the back of the house; and where, consequently, her appeals for admission had a better chance of being heard. While Mrs. Stokes was still knocking with a stone against the cottage door, she heard a rustling in the hedge on her left hand, and presently a loud, well-toned, deep voice, bearing evident symptoms of inebriety, from occasional hiccuppings and tremulousness, singing—

“ The Deil came fiddling through the town,
And danc'd awa wi' the exciseman ;
And ilka wife cried ‘ Auld Mahoun,
We wish you luck o' the prize, man.’

“ We'll mak our maut, and brew our drink,
We'll dance, and sing, and rejoice, man ;
And monie thanks to the mickle black Deil
That danc'd awa wi' the exciseman.

“ There's threesome reels and foursome reels,
There's hornpipes and strathspeys, man :
But the ae best dance e'er cam to our lan'
Was—the Deil's awa wi' the exciseman.
We'll mak our maut,” &c.

“ Why, bless me !” cried Mrs. Stokes, as the singer cleared the hedge, and stood beside her, “ Captain Datchet ! that’s never you, to be sure ? If I did not think you was away in the Ingees !”

“ Ship a-hoy there !” cried the person so addressed, unceremoniously placing his arm round Mrs. Stokes’s substantial waist, and drawing her towards him, “ where are you steering for, my trim little craft, with the wind right a-head—eh ?”

“ Lor, captain, do let me go,” said Mrs. Stokes, struggling to free herself ; “ I see you hain’t left none o’ your old tricks behind you. But I expect John Stokes here every moment, and though he is sich a hatomy, it would never do for him to find you at this work.”

“ Why, my pretty chaffinch, is that you,” said the stranger, releasing Mrs. Stokes’s waist, and grasping her hand like a cable, and shaking it violently ; “ why, what made you weigh anchor such a night as this ? and how is honest John ? forgotten the very smell of real Cognac, I suppose. I’ve been so many months away, and you, I suspect, have begun to doubt whether there are any more ribbons made in France, you have been so long fain to put up with a poor mongrel Coventry top-knot : but

my name is not Miles Datchet if you don't soon hoist gayer pennants than ever, that shall you ;" and here he wrung her hand more violently than ever.

Miles Datchet was a great man in his way, having committed every crime short of murder, and being so totally devoid of every species of principle, as to be almost fit for a prime minister, except that he was never known to break faith with his coadjutors, and was notorious for that species of honour proverbially to be found among thieves. These shades of human weakness, which, alas ! sometimes obscure the greatest minds, would certainly have militated against his obtaining the pinnacle of political greatness, and therefore it is lucky that destiny had assigned to him a career of less scope—that of a mere sea politician—alias pirate. His genius for intrigue was so great, that he had acted the part of a successful spy under several governments, faithfully serving all and each, never being able (as he philosophically observed) to discover any difference in the colour, weight, and currency of the coin of the realm, whether the helm of state were swayed by Whig or Tory ; save that he had been heard to confess that it flowed more freely and certainly from the latter—as though they, like the

Milesian gentleman of the road from whom their name is derived, entertained juster ideas of the distribution of wealth than most modern political economists; while the sweetest promises of the Whigs were apt to turn as soon, and become as unavailable, as the original of their own soubriquet. But in England, where morality is preached more and practised less than in any other country of the known world, Miles Datchet knew too well the value of that most powerful of all talismans, appearances, not to study them upon all occasions; consequently, his nominal calling was that of captain of a merchantman; and though he did sell French brandy, French silks, and Latikai tobacco, cheaper than English could be purchased, yet no one thought of attributing the phenomenon to any other cause but an excess of philanthropy which made him anxious touching the comforts and luxuries of all his fellow-creatures; and surely a universal philanthropist could not defraud any man, merely because he had the misfortune to be an exciseman!

Among the female portion of the community, a very handsome Salvator Rosa-like face and commanding figure might have insured his popularity, even had he been less generous in his gifts brought from all parts of the world;

and, added to a great deal of natural humour, he possessed a mosaic of anecdote collected from every point of the compass. At Blichingly he was a universal favourite; and had any doubts ever been entertained of his cleverness, they would have been entirely removed, upon his having once effected a Glaucus and Diomedé exchange with Miss Mac Screw: that lady was the happy possessor of a gold box containing a nutmeg-grater, which she was wont to affirm had belonged to the Pretender.

Captain Datchet, through a mysterious eloquence known only to himself, undertook to convince her that it was pinchbeck, offering her in exchange, for the paltry sum of three guineas, a real pinchbeck one, assuming the travelling title of gold, which he said had for many years belonged to old Elwes the miser, and had always been called by him his lucky box, as, to use his own forcible words, money actually appeared to breed in it. All Blichingly was aware of the truth—save and except the fair Mac Screw herself; and as no one had the cruelty to undeceive her, her eyes always sparkled at the sight of Miles Datchet, with the conscious pleasure of having overreached him!

Datchet's present mission to Lee's cottage was to look for Madge Brindal, who was (with

all due respect to appearance) his Blichingly sultana. He had returned from the Levant, for reasons best known to himself, sooner than she, or any one else, had expected ; and having been to the gipsy haunt, at the old abbey, above the Fairy Bath, and finding it deserted by all save a gipsy boy, who was piquetting some donkeys in the close, he learned from him where Madge was most probably to be found, and lost no time in seeking her, which will account for his sudden apparition before Mrs. Stokes.

“ But, seriously,” resumed Datchet, “ what could bring you out such an evening as this ? ”

“ Indeed you may well ask, captain,” replied Mrs. Stokes, wringing the wet out of the skirts of her petticoats, “ but it did not rain when I set out, and I come to bring Mary Lee some wine—for, poor thing ! I think she grows weaker and weaker—more melancholy and moping-like ; and we’ve a had a letter from my lord, as says she’s a going to marry Richard Brindal ; but we hav’n’t heerd nothink on it ; and what’s more cur’us still, he hain’t heerd nothink on it either, so I’m come to hear what she says ; but, lord, here have I been a knocking and knocking, first at one side of the house and then at the other, till I’m almost drowned—

to say nothink of seeing the hawfullest things imaginable, and can't make them hear, do what I will."

Totally regardless of the latter part of Mrs. Stokes's speech, Datchet gave a long shrill whistle, as he took up a stone to knock at the door, and then repeated, nodding his head—

" When the dove marries with the crow,
Then we'll hear the green grass grow ;
And the blind mole shall straightway find
He can see the rushing wind."

" Helo, there !" said a voice, as Datchet was again besieging the door.

" Oh ! Mr. Lee," said Mrs. Stokes, turning round to the person who had called out, " I'm so glad you have come at last, for I have been trying till I am tired to get in ; and only guess who's arrived?" continued she, pointing to Miles Datchet.

" How are you, my boy?" said the latter, grasping Lee's hand as cordially as he had previously done Mrs. Stokes's.

" Why, captain ! what wind blew you here?" asked the old man, as he placed his carpenter's basket on the step of the door, and felt in his pockets for the latch-key.

" It's an ill wind that blows nobody good,"

replied Datchet, avoiding a direct answer; "and I dare say you can smell the Virginian weed in it by this time, and it won't be the less easily smoked because I did a crew of d—d Yankees out of it; but that's an after-supper yarn; so open the door, my hearty, and let us get under hatches before another squall comes on."

"How's this?" said Lee, as he pushed open the door, and entered the dark and fireless front room of his cottage; "this is but a cold reception, captain. My poor girl! my poor girl!—I suppose she's ill again."

"No, no," interposed Mrs. Stokes good-naturedly; "don't ee fret, Master Lee, I know where she is—it's all right, only she did not expect you, I suppose; and if you and the captain will just wait here, I'll go and bring them to you, for Madge is with her." So saying, she passed her hand along the wall till she found the door, which having done, she opened, and groped her way along the narrow passage till she came to the door of the workshop, to which she was directed by the firelight which streamed from beneath it. Her first impulse was to turn the handle suddenly, and boldly appear before the guilty pair in the midst of their unhallowed rites; but Madge Brindal, the witch, deserving of a horsepond a few

minutes before, was now transformed into the reigning favourite of the all-powerful Captain Datchet—a person not to be offended with impunity;—so charity and toleration—in the visionary forms of Lisle lace and silk dresses—flitted across the mind of Mrs. Stokes, and “wrought a mighty change,” that caused her to knock gently at the door, and calmly enter to the as gentle response of “Come in.”

All traces of the late scene had passed away. Mary and her companion were quietly seated at the fire—Mary with her arms folded, and her eyes intently fixed upon the blazing fagots before her, and Madge thrown back in her chair, with little Wasp in her lap, deluding himself into the belief that she had some hidden treasure in her hand, by holding it above her head, and keeping him on the tiptoe of expectation, like many a cleverer dog—grasping at a chimera!

“Mary, love,” said Mrs. Stokes, “your father is come home, and wants some fire and some supper; and here am I, like a drowned rat, knocking for the last half hour, first at one door and then at the other, and could not make either of you hear. What have you been about?”

“Why, who could hear in such a storm as

this?" asked Madge, seeing that Mary was too much abstracted to answer; and fearing that if she did, she might let out too much of the truth.

"Why, that's true enough," rejoined Mrs. Stokes; "but if the storm was ten times greater, I suppose you could hear good news?"

"Good news! what news?" gasped Mary, with that vague anticipation of a something which for ever haunts the wretched and the forsaken.

"Why, I have good news for you too, poor child," replied Mrs. Stokes; "but it will keep till by-and-bye, for they are waiting in the next room without either fire or light; so make haste, and let us go to them."

"And who may they and them be, pray?" inquired Madge.

"Ay, there it is now," said Mrs. Stokes; "that's my news, and it concerns you, Madge—who do you think is come back?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said Madge, listlessly—"Richard, I suppose; for that kettle is full of rabbits and pheasants which I found here this afternoon—so I suppose he's come back from the north, for that's generally the way he leaves his card;" and Madge laughed as she rose to deaden the blaze, under the

savoury mess of game and vegetables that was boiling over the fire.

“No—guess again; you are wrong for once in your life, Madge, though your brother is returned, for he was at our house this afternoon; but it is not him I mean.”

“Oh, I suppose then it’s Freddy Flippis, who I sent to Rushworth this morning, about a covered cart, to take us to Triverton fair.”

“No, no; you must go a great deal further than Rushworth—you are *miles* away from being right yet—*miles* away, Madge;” and Mrs. Stokes held her sides as she laughed at her own wit.

“Why,” said Madge, her cheek flushing and her eyes flashing, as she advanced a step or two, and looked inquiringly into Mrs. Stokes’s face, “you have not heard anything of Miles Datchet, have you?—The — the captain—I mean.”

“What if I had not only heard of him, but seen him?”

“Impossible!” said Madge; “he is far away at sea now; and——”

“Only a plank between him and you.”

“What do you mean? do speak out,” said Madge, impatiently.

“Well, well, Madge, I see you are not a

witch after all ; and so, to make a long story short, Captain Datchet is in the next room."

Madge rushed hastily to the door ; but suddenly recollecting that Datchet, like all great men, was tenacious as to decorum, she walked leisurely back to the cradle where Mary's child was sleeping, merely saying as she passed Mrs. Stokes, " Is he really ?"—and then added, turning to Mary, " I'll take up little William, if you'll carry the candle, Mary ; and I dare say Mrs. Stokes will be so good as to take a burning brand in the tongs to light a fire in the next room."

All these arrangements made, accompanied by a little crying on the part of the child at being disturbed, the procession moved into the front room, headed by Mrs. Stokes with a burning log, followed by Mary with the candle, while Madge brought up the rear with the child. Mrs. Stokes lost no time in dashing forward to her destination, the fire-place, to deposit her fiery burden, and when there, had a great deal of stooping and blowing to prevail on the damp fagots within it to imitate the example of the new arrival. Mary, as was her wont, threw her arms round her father's neck, so there was nothing left for Captain Datchet to do, in order to avoid the root of all evil—idleness—

but to imprint divers salutes upon the peach-like cheeks and coral lips of Madge, under the pretext of kissing the child ; while he slipped a Venice chain and a pair of Genoa earrings into her hand, which she, with equal dexterity, concealed in her bosom, acknowledging these last *gages d'amour* with a tender pressure of the hand.

“ I hope, Mary, you have some supper for us ?” said Lee to his daughter.

“ Yes,” said Madge ; “ thanks to Dick’s return, you’ve no stint to-night.”

“ I don’t like game,” said the old man with a sigh, the full meaning of which Madge knew but too well partly alluded to her brother’s lawless avocations, and partly to his own fallen state in having such friends and associates.

“ Beggars must not be choosers,” retorted Madge, her eyes flashing, and her neck stretched to its most swan-like dimensions ; “ and when the craft and villany of the rich man has the power of depriving us of our bread, it is lucky, to say nothing of justice, that the cunning of the poor man has sometimes the power of supplying the deficiency.”

“ Madge, you are right,” said the old man, holding out his hand to her as he brushed away a tear with the back of the other ; “ and I—I—am a pusillanimous fool—but it won’t always be so.”

“ Right ! to be sure, she’s right,” said Datchet applaudingly, as he filled his pipe from a supply of tobacco in the side-pocket of his rough sailor’s jacket, and held it to the candle ; and may all poor men, who approve of

‘ Laws for the rich, and poor-laws for the poor,’

never have anything better, say I ;”—and here he gave a puff of sufficient strength and density to have blown away — Great Marlborough Street.”

“ Well,” said Madge, with restored good humour, “ I’ll go and see about supper.”

“ And I,” cried Datchet, gallantly removing the pipe from his mouth, and sticking it in his left-hand waistcoat pocket, with the bowl upwards, “ I’ll go and help you.”

There is a proverb which asserts that “ many hands make light work.” Be this as it may, it is very certain that Madge Brindal’s preparations for supper did not appear at all expedited by her having the assistance of Captain Datchet, for an unaccountably long time elapsed before they returned with even the knives, forks, plates, and other preliminaries for supper. However, their absence gave Mrs. Stokes the wished for opportunity of sounding Mary as to her reported

marriage with Richard Brindal; so, after she had prevailed upon the fire to light, hung her cloak and bonnet before it, and turned herself slowly round and round, for the space of a quarter of an hour, so as to give her nether garments the benefit of its impartial influence, she ventured to sit down, and drawing her chair close to Mary's, and pulling out her apron tightly at each side (as laundresses draw out pocket handkerchiefs) while she spoke, she thus opened her mission.

"Mary dear, what's this I hear about your going to marry Richard Brindal?"

Mary raised her eyes, and fixed them steadily upon her companion, as she answered calmly, and coldly—

"Mrs. Stokes, you have been very kind to me—even kind when all others became the reverse—and that is a thing not to be forgotten; yet I know not that even that miracle authorises you to insult me with such a question."

"Well, well, love," replied Mrs. Stokes, soothingly, as she drew Lord de Clifford's letter out of her pocket; "I don't be angry, for you see greater folks than I have heerd on it; for here's a letter from my lord his self, who makes very handsome offers in case you should marry Richard, and so does the old lady too."

If Mary could grow paler, she did, as she convulsively seized the letter, and ran her eye wildly over its contents—

“Monster ! cold-blooded wretch !” she exclaimed, clenching her hand when she had read it—“all your plots shall not succeed ; the poor lowborn serf, the outcast, the insignificant maniac whom you would make still madder, may still be too much for you.”

Lee, who had been looking over a file of old bills at a walnut-tree bureau, now took off his spectacles, and laying them upon the top of it, walked over to his daughter, and placing his arm round her waist, kindly drew her towards him.

“How now, Mary,” said he, in a voice of assumed cheerfulness, “I should have thought you had too much sense to be ruffled by a paltry electioneering trick, and that letter is nothing more ; as we cannot give the writer his deserts, suppose we treat *it* as it deserves, and put it into the fire.”

“No, no,” said Mary, grasping the letter tightly, and holding it over her shoulder, let birds of a feather go together ; there are more of the same, and with them it shall remain ; see if they won’t make a precipice yet.” And here she gave one of those shrill idiotic laughs,

which echoed like a knell in the poor old man's heart ; the more so, that it was a long time since he had seen or heard her so excited. The word precipice recalled the incantation scene vividly to Mrs. Stokes's recollection, and covering her face with her hands, she exclaimed with a shudder, " The Lord be good to us !" and then added, with that indescribable want of tact peculiar to vulgar minds, " well, give me back the letter, do, there's a dear." Mary's only reply to this appeal was to turn full upon Mrs. Stokes one of those vacant petrifying looks, which were often assumed to gain her point, and which, from filling all beholders with indescribable terror, never failed to do so. " Well, well," said Mrs. Stokes, in answer to it, " keep the letter, dear, or anything else you like." Mary's head sank quietly on her father's shoulder, while he held his hand over his eyes to hide the tears that were trickling down his withered cheeks. Mrs. Stokes felt a sort of choking in the throat, and rose to open the wine she had brought for Mary, and begged her to drink it. Mary looked up for a moment, and shaking her head, said " No, no, it's blood-red, give it to Madge."

" Who wants Madge?" said the latter, en-

tering with the supper things, followed by Datchet bearing a large tureen full of stewed game, the gift of Richard Brindal, of which his sister had before made mention.

“Why, we all want you,” said Lee, assuming a cheerful tone, to try and divert Mary’s attention, and turn the current of her thoughts—“we all want you, if you bring us anything to eat; for I don’t know how the captain there feels, but I begin to think that a seven hours’ fast gives us an appetite.”

“And I,” cried Datchet, placing the tureen upon the table, where Madge had by this time laid the cloth, “feel wonderfully inclined to have a battue among this fine preserve of pheasants, which, in their present state, are fit for a king, and still fitter for a captain. Ladies all, here’s to you,” added he, seating himself at the table, and filling out a glass of Mrs. Stokes’s wine, which he drank off without waiting to see what the contents of the bottle might be.

“Well, now,” cried Mrs. Stokes, who declined eating, but sat by the fire, her head turned towards the supper-table, her legs crossed, her gown turned up, and her right hand gracefully placed, like a slice of ham in a sandwich, between the knee of her right and the under part of her left leg—“well, now,

Mary, I shall be quite hurt if you don't take a glass of wine too, for it was for you I brought it; not but what the captain (as I hope he knows) is welcome to the best wine in our house, nobody more so, and I hope he'll soon come and make good my words; but Mary wants it, poor thing!"

"It's not the first, and I hope it won't be the last time, that I've drank your health, Mary," said Datchet, "and so you must not, for once, refuse to drink mine."

Mary took the proffered wine, more to avoid Mrs. Stokes's petting persecutions than from any other motive; and having consented to eat, in order to please her father, Datchet, whose inebriety seemed to decrease as his appetite increased, began to talk for ten and eat for six.

"Very respectable wine that of yours, Mrs. Stokes," said he, as he drained the bottle, pushed away his plate, and leant back in his chair to pause from his exertions—"very respectable, but I could give you something that would astonish you all, if I could get any one to go as far as the abbey—I mean any one we know—any one that's to be trusted."

"Lor, captain," cried Mrs. Stokes, with a shudder, "I don't suppose as you'd get any

one to go for love or money ; for they do say as ghostesses and spirits walk there, pertickler these dark, dismal, winter nights."

"Spirits walk there, do they ?" says Datchet, with a wink at Madge, "ha ! ha ! ha ! bless you, it's only the habit they have of *doing* the Excise, and they only walk to show that they are not *run*. By-the-bye, that reminds me of a lot of tobacco that came into my possession for you, Master Lee ! and here's some of it," said he, removing from his pockets, as he spoke, two large packets, and placing them before Lee.

"This is very fine by the smell," said Lee, "and must have been brought from a great distance?"

"Only from Falmouth, sir, only from Falmouth ;" and Datchet drew another chair, upon which he placed his feet, and leaning back in the one in which he sat, re-lit his pipe, and puffed away consequentially.

"I had no idea it was so easily to be had," replied Lee.

"Not easy to be had ? pu, pu, puff—nearly lost me my life getting it."

"Dear me, that was no joke."

"Wrong again—pu, pu, puff—it was all a joke."

“ Ah, I recollect you said you got it from some Americans, and promised to tell me the story.”

“ Pu, pu, puff—so I will, as soon as this pipe’s aground ; here, Madge, my girl, handing her a flask of brandy out of his most prolific pocket, that wine’s most confoundedly strong, mix me a glass of grog to take off the effects of it—not too much cold water, though ; pu, pu, puff—cholera going—cold water—pu, pu, puff—very dangerous.”

“ I can’t bear it at any time,” interposed Mrs. Stokes.

“ Well, sir, you must know,” said Datchet, emptying the ashes out of his pipe on the table, and returning it to his waistcoat pocket, “ when I was at Marseilles a short time ago, I fell in with an American chap who had just landed from a Chinaman, and hearing I should soon be in England, he asked me to take charge of some slips and seeds of the *outom-chu*, which you must know is a Chinese tree, very like our sycamore, only the leaves are between eight or nine inches in diameter, fastened to a stalk about a foot long, which is so tufted and laden with flowers, that not a single ray of the sun can squeeze through ’em ; and for all the leaves and blossoms are so big, the fruit is so extra-

ordinary small that it is not much bigger than a pea ; so that, altogether, you see it's a curiosity, and would stand alone but for the Reform Bill, which resembles it, inasmuch as that its flourishing and flowery promises have produced very small fruits. But to go back to the Yankee chap who I left standing on the quay at Marseilles—he gives me a packet of *outom-chu*—slips and seeds—directed to ‘The Honourable Cæsar Lycurgus Rantandcant, New York, care of Captain Milton Scroggins, of the Mohawk, Lion Hotel, Falmouth,’ as he wanted to cross over to Civitavecchia (I suppose to ascertain Gasparani's notions of liberty) before he returned to America. The parcel not being over large, I took it ; and when I got to Falmouth, finding the Mohawk was in port, and not to sail till the next day, I thought I might as well go aboard, and see what sort of vessel she was ; so stowing the Honourable Cæsar Lycurgus Rantandcant away in my hat, I pushed off for the Mohawk.

“ When I came alongside, I saw the captain's gig laden with luggage, and a sallow-looking gentleman, with a very long nose and a back to match, standing on the edge of the boat, and giving particular directions about a writing-desk which he was handing up to the mate of the Mohawk. Presently a little man in the

boat, with a black coat, cocked hat, very dirty shirt, and a large diamond pin, who turned out to be the first lieutenant of the Mohawk, cried out to the sallow-looking chap, 'I guess you'd be a tarnation deal more convenient on shore till the vessel sails.'

"Whether it was that, after such an extra allowance of nose, he had been put upon short commons with regard to ears, or that they were stowed away in the writing-desk the mate had just taken on board, I don't know, but Yellowhammer took no more notice of the first lieutenant than if he had been a tailor asking for his bill.

" 'I calculate you're considerable in the way there,' repeated the first lieutenant, this time impressing the observation on him by a gentle push, which, however, sent poor Mustard-face clean into the sea; but all hands instantly coming to his assistance, we soon handed him up again, his head not even having time to get under water. As soon as he had recovered himself sufficiently to speak, and smoothed down his face with a wet pocket-handkerchief, he rose majestically like a spring-tide, and looking resolutely at the first lieutenant, said, without moving a muscle of his face, 'Sir, I shall report you to the admiral.'

“ ‘ What need of reporting me to the admiral — I can give ee satisfaction, can’t I ?’

“ ‘ Sir,’ said the damp gentleman, ‘ I am a clergyman.’

“ ‘ Well, what o’ that : we’ve got one of your cloth on board, and he can satisfy ee, can’t ee, without ee troubling the admiral ?’

“ To this the long gentleman made no answer, but throwing a contemptuous look at the first lieutenant, clambered up the ship’s ladder ; and I followed his example. As soon as I had set my foot on deck, I requested to be shown down into Captain Milton Scroggins’s cabin, which was accordingly done. I had no sooner entered, than a little Yankee cur darted off the sofa, and began barking at me through his nose, which caused Captain Milton Scroggins — a short, thick-set, dark-coloured man, in whose face the small-pox had been playing at cribbage, and who was sitting with his feet on the table, reading the *Examiner*, a glass of grog on one side of him, and a spittoon on the other—to raise his head and say, ‘ What may your pleasure be ?’

“ I placed my packet of seeds and slips before him, telling him how it had come into my possession at Marseilles, with a request that I would deliver it safely.

“ ‘ Oh, much obliged to ee, but I’m sure, as

I always say, I find all Europe-yans (Europe-ans) partickler obliging and conformable. Sorry I sail to-morrow, but next time I come to Falmouth, hope to see ee on board the Mohawk. Shall spare no expense to entertain ee—perhaps a little tobacco may be agreeable to ee? Got some uncommon fine Latakai—cost me forty-five of the best Baltimore for a dozen pounds of it; be glad to give ee some for ee trouble in bringing me the Outom-chu seeds.’

“ I thanked him, and it being one of my maxims to take everything but three things, which I never do if I can avoid it—cold, trouble, and advice—I accepted his offer. While he was selecting a packet for me off an adjoining table on which there were several, down came the first lieutenant.

“ ‘ Please, captain, Mr. Trevyllian is come aboard. I told him we didn’t sail till to-morrow, but he says he prefers embarking to day.’

“ ‘ Well, let his luggage be stowed away,’ replied the captain.

“ ‘ Luggage!’ repeated the first lieutenant, “ he’s tarnation little troubled with that. Why, he’s brought nothing aboard but his pipe, his wife, and a pair of slippers; or rather, he’s brought his wife, and she’s brought his pipe and slippers, for she’s carrying both.’

“ ‘ Ah, that’s the way with all your great geniuses,’ said the captain, ‘ they’re always a doing things out of the common, and unlike other people ; wonderful man Mr. Trevyllian, they say he bangs Byron at conjugalities and catastrophes. You know him, perhaps, sir ?’

“ ‘ Never heard of him,’ said I.

“ ‘ Never heard of him ! well, that’s queer, too. I thought every Europe-yan at least had heard of him—all the Europe-yan ladies, ’specially the English, are mad after him—no wonder he has had seven wives, and they say killed—that is, *murdered*—for there is a difference between killing and murdering,—the former being a sort of cowardly anonymous way that many men put an end to their wives : but he openly and honourably murdered five of his ; but I never believe half what I hear.’

“ ‘ Nor I neither,’ said I,—‘ so I dare say that it was only two and a half ! But, even at that rate, he must still have an extra wife,—a Sunday and an every-day one like. Pray, sir, is he famous for nothing else ?—for that’s by no means so uncommon.’

“ ‘ Yes, he writes books,—he wrote a novel called the Unnatural Son, which being full of terrible things was naturally much admired.’ ”

“ Bless me ! what a orrid villain,” interrupted

Mrs. Stokes ; “ murder five wives ! and why wasn’t he hanged five times for it at Newgate, pray ? ”

“ Why, my dear, he was a gentleman and a genius, and they may do anything ; it is only common people that are deprived of murder, with many other luxuries,” said Datchet.

“ And more shame for them as deprives ’em,” exclaimed Mrs. Stokes, tying on her bonnet vehemently.

“ Well, to go on with my story,” continued Datchet, “ while we were still talking, who should come in but Mr. Trevyllian himself ? I must confess he was a wonderful-looking person—there was a kind of patent self-acting-villain air about him, that gave one the idea of the devil’s being a baby to him in wickedness, that was truly surprising and uncommon—his wife (the one at the time being in waiting I mean,) he had, it appears, sent to bed, and he had come to try and effect a transfer with Captain Milton Scroggins, for some cypress wine he had lying in the docks, in exchange for some of the captain’s much-vaunted tobacco.

“ Scroggins expressed himself but too proud to have it in his power to oblige so great a man, and then glancing at a pair of large yellow embroidered Turkish slippers that the new-comer

wore, added, ‘ You must be cruel easy, sir, I calculate, in those outlandish shufflers—pity they’re not in parliament, they’d being forred such a capital motion on the corn laws.’

“ At this, Captain Milton Scroggins and the great man laughed together for five minutes, and then the latter added, ‘ Yes, and, like most of the motions in that house, it would be all ‘ leather and prunella.’ This rose Mr. Trevyllian in my opinion, because, though he was what Mr. Liston calls a bigamarian, it convinced me that in other matters he was not above speaking the truth. This induced me to cast an eye over him, and seeing my attention fixed upon a dagger he wore in his belt, he very civilly drew it out, telling me that it was poisoned with a poison subtle enough to retain its deadly qualities for a thousand years, and powerful enough to depopulate the world, if the inhabitants were only inoculated with it—that it had been given to him as a parting gift by a Bedouin chief, to whom he had paid a visit in the desert of some months. I took the weapon—to my eyes it had a most Blue-beardish appearance ; in stretching my hand across the table for it, the two packets of tobacco which the captain had given me, began to steer towards the door, and putting out my hand suddenly to stop them, the dagger

fell, and the point of it coming against my wrist, grazed the skin, but fortunately did not draw the blood."

" Luckily, indeed !" said Madge, turning very pale, " for, being poisoned, it would have killed you."

" And had he been a *ooman*, I've no doubt but it would, " interposed Mrs. Stokes ; " but the wicked monster of a thing knew that it was neither *ooman* or wife, and *hit's* evident to me that's what *hit* had been used to."

" I hope, though," said Lee, " you did not feel the worse after it ; for even that slight scratch might have been dangerous."

" Why, to tell you the truth," resumed Datchet, " I did feel an' unpleasant burning and throbbing all up my arm for more than a week after, though the ship's surgeon soon set me to rights ; after which I began to think that I had had enough of Captain Milton Scroggins, the amateur grand Turk, and, above all, his poisoned dagger—so wishing them both a good voyage, I took my leave and went on shore, and, two days after the Mohawk had sailed, I had the inexpressible sorrow and surprise to find, that instead of the two packets of tobacco Scroggins had presented me with, six had in some mysterious and unaccountable manner found their

way into my pocket ; but on reflection I attributed this apparent miracle to the omnipotent agency of that wonderful American invention, entitled concentrated essence of the sublimated spirit of steam, of which a person has only to put a small phial in his pocket, and it will carry him on at the rate of fifty miles an hour ; so I concluded that a little of this precious essence must have been among the packets of Latakai on board the Mohawk, and so impelled them into my pocket, where, meeting with no more of the sublimated spirit, they remained for want of further impetus !”

“ O captain, captain,” said Lee with a half smile, as he shook his head, “ it was too bad to steal the poor man’s tobacco after his kindly giving you some.”

“ Steal !” said Datchet, laughing as he rose from his chair and buttoned his coat, “ no, no, massa, as the niggers say, I no steal him,—Sambo scorn steal, I *only take* him—but come, it’s time to be going—so good-bye, Master Lee ; I shall see you again before I go, but I’m off again in a few days.”

“ Again !” repeated Madge with a sigh, and in a tone of inquiry, to which, however, Datchet paid no attention ; but turning to Mrs. Stokes, who had finished all her preparations for depar-

ture, even to putting on her pattens, said, "You must let me convey you home, Mrs. Stokes, for you are much too young and too pretty (gazing with mock admiration on her fat bloated face now glowing like a kitchen-fire) to walk by yourself at this time of night, even through the quiet village of Blichingly."

"Lor ! captain," simpered Mrs. Stokes, "if you ain't jist the same as *hever* you was."

"Now that's exactly what I think of you," replied Datchet, "that you're just the same that you ever were, not a day older than when I first knew you, ten years ago ; but though I am surrounded by youth and beauty," continued he, bowing gallantly, first to Mrs. Stokes, (who was fluttering beneath his compliments like a parrot in the sun,) and then to Mary and Madge, "I must not forget my old friends: how is Miss Mac Screw? does she still live in Lavender-lane?"

"Yes, sure," said Mrs. Stokes, "and finds it as difficult as ever to buy pepper and salt, and such like rarities, with two hundred thousand pounds ! only that she never keeps a shilling by her, but has it all locked up in them ere debentures and things—I declare I'd break into the house myself ; but I hope, as you've got another *goold* box for her, captain—ha ! ha ! ha ! that

was the best day's work as you *hever* did. But only think, there's Parson Hoskins after her ; he as cast the *hold* lady up at the Park in the law-suit about the tithes, and he's laid a *himmense* bet with his cousin, Mr. Tymmons the 'torney, who pretends to the *hold* lady that he won't see Hoskins after his conduct to her, but he does though on the sly. Well, *he've* laid a *himmense* bet, somethink quite *tremenjus* with him, that he'll get Miss Mac Screw to marry him, but I don't think as he will, for all he's so 'cute, for she've a refused dozens of sightlier men nor him, 'cause she knows as it's *honly* her money they wants."

"Well done, parson !" laughed Datchet,—
"a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband, as Solomon says ; and as no one can have any doubt of Miss Mac Screw's virtue—defended, as it has ever been, by her face—she will be a great many crowns to her husband, if she can be prevailed upon to bestow the enviable title upon Hoskins. And as for her heart, I've no doubt, being perfectly orthodox, he'd be content with the tithe—ha ! ha ! ha ! Hang me if I don't go and see the bride elect to-morrow. Well, good-night to you again, my fine fellow," added he, stretching out his hand to Lee ; and then shaking Mary's more gently, he turned to Madge

and Mrs. Stokes, offering each of them an arm, and saying that he would first deposit Mrs Stokes safely at her own house, and then walk to the abbey with Madge. When the trio left the cottage, every trace of the late storm had passed away—all around was “calm as a child’s repose”—the air was singularly fresh and fragrant, while the whole landscape was flooded with the light of the clear cold moon, which was riding high in the heavens, shining out like hope laden with happy morrows—that never come!

CHAPTER IV.

“ She is none of your dainty dames, who love to appear in a variety of suits, every day new ; as if a good gown, like a stratagem in war, were to be used but once.”—FULLER.

“ Win her with gifts—if she respect not words ;
Dumb jewels often, in their silent kind,
More than quick words, do move a woman’s mind.”

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

“ I have a penny to spend,
I’m beholden to nobody,
I’ll neither borrow nor lend.”—BURNS.

DEAR reader, if it be not giving you too much trouble to rise at eight in the morning, pray walk with me as far as Lavender-lane, and allow me to introduce you to Miss Mac Screw. Did the dirt and deficiencies of her ménage arise from poverty, I should fear to disgust your too delicate sensibility ; but as they only arise from the little amiable eccentricities of a millionaire, they may create a smile. Miss Lavinia Mac

Screw was of Irish extraction, and of a tolerable family ; the only surviving branches of which (beside herself) consisted of a mother, who, had she been poor, would have been called mad ; but being rich, was only thought odd : and three brothers, a rich elder one, who had married an heiress ; and two younger ones, possessed of no more of this world's dross than a half-pay company and majority in two marching regiments supplied. In her secret soul, Miss Lavinia Mac Screw had decided upon making her rich elder brother her heir and residuary legatee ; but with a sisterly affection, which the dowager Lady de Clifford would have said “ did great credit to her head and *hort*,” she had apportioned ten pounds to each of her younger ones to buy mourning rings. The fair Lavinia's penetration was as keen as her appetite. Well did she analyse the motives for which she was courted by all ; and doubly did she enjoy the dinners she ate at her neighbours' expense, from the reflection that she should not even pay *legacy duty* for them ! In the formation of her person, nature had been as economical as she herself was in its decoration. She was short and exceedingly thin, with feet and hands that might have belonged to a giantess. Her eyes were black, small, round,

and restless; her nose long and spiky; her mouth wide, but well filled with long yellow teeth; her voice was short and sharp, as if it was eternally straining to keep in a well-muzzled brogue. Words were the only things she was extravagant in, as she generally repeated her last sentence twice over, shuffling about all the time on the edge of her seat, and suddenly hopping from one chair to another as a bird does from twig to twig. Her dress baffles description, unless, reader, thou canst, by a stretch of imagination, fancy a very lanky and ill-filled rag-bag, suddenly endowed with locomotive powers, lilting a sprightly measure to the tune of "The Light of other Days."

In the house or out of the house, her morning head-gear, summer and winter, was an old Leghorn bonnet, with a very large high flat crown, resembling a souffle dish—the leaf exceedingly small in proportion, though enlarged by a binding of broad green thrice-washed sarcenet ribbon, with strings to correspond; and three large black holyoaks, composed of feathers, bobbing in the front, like young hearse-plumes. But as she generally contrived to dine out every day, she always (what she called) dressed for dinner,—that is, put on a pink or yellow leno dress, while a silk pocket-handkerchief twisted

tight round her head officiated as a turban, without interfering with two large and very dusty bunches of short black false ringlets, that appeared to be playing at hide and seek all over her forehead; and which, with a string of blue, yellow, or green glass beads tight round her throat, and a pair of brown cotton Berlin gloves, and nankin shoes, with a rainbow scarf of coloured worsteds in cold weather, completed her evening toilet; unless on very grand occasions indeed, such as an assize ball, or the christening of one of Mrs. Tymmons's children, and then the black feather holyoaks were transplanted from the Leghorn bonnet to the pocket-handkerchief turban, so that they were about as well known through the county as the tax-gatherer; for Miss Mac Screw made a point of attending every sort of *réunion* where anything in the shape of eating and drinking was to be had, from the harmless tea and attenuated bread and butter of the county balls, to the strong geese and strong ale of a harvest home. The expense of carriage-hire would, indeed, have been an insurmountable barrier to these amusements, had not every one in the neighbourhood always been ready to take "dear Miss Mac Screw anywhere; and the Tymmonses kept a fly, (a green one,) and the Moggses kept a fly, (a

yellow one,) and the Simmonses kept a carriage, (a Waterloo-blue one, picked out with red,) and the Bumpasses kept a coach; and not one of these amiable families but had an Emma, or a Charlotte, or a Georgy, ever ready to stay at home, so as to make room for dear Miss Mac Screw; or a Tom, or a Bob, or a Dick, equally ready to go on the box, or walk, even on such nights as none save the witches in Macbeth would care to encounter.

The worst of it was, that although the Simmonses' carriage was by far the most comfortable, yet the Simmonses and the Tymmonses were at daggers-drawn, — being rivals in everything except equipages, where, of course, the carriage drove the fly out of the field. The eldest Miss Tymmons had red hair, but then she played all Strauss's waltzes and galopes better than Strauss himself, (at least so her mother said.) Well, what of that? Miss Simmons had an equivalent cast in her very verdant eyes, and rivalled Herz, Doehler, and Thalberg combined, as a pianiste;—here then was equality again. But then, Mr. Rush Tymmons wrote poetry—went without a neckcloth—wore his shirt-collar horizontally—looked as if he committed great excesses in toast and water—and, in short, was the Byron of Blichingly. Then, again, Mr. Sam

Simmons had written *such* an article in the Ladies' Magazine, upon tight lacing, pathology, and green tea, that he was considered to beat him hollow in science and profundity. Mr. Tymmons, senior, was awfully vulgar; ditto, Mr. Simmons, senior, and Mrs. S. was unconcealably ashamed of him; ditto Mrs. T. of Mr. T. But the younger branches of the family were so very "*genteel*!" that there was nothing like them,—except it might be the younger branches of the Simmonses, and they would rather have been like nothing than like the Tymmonses. Next clashed their love of aristocratic acquaintances, which was not only their glory in particular, but like glory in general, inasmuch as it was

" Like a circle in the water,
Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself
Till by broad spreading it disperse to nought."

Mr. Tymmons being a radical, Lord de Clifford and his mother used to honour him with their company at dinner once during every election, on which memorable occasions, a man cook, waiters, lamps, and champagne glasses, were always hired from Triverton. While, on the other hand, Mr. Simmons being a Tory, was, with his wife and seven daughters, during these elective periods of national independence

and discrimination, always invited by Lady Sudbury to her tableaux at Campfield — the last of which had been from the Vicar of Wakefield, representing neighbour Flamborough's family picture, wherein the seven Miss Simmonses represented the seven Miss Flamboroughs with seven oranges in their hands, and produced such a sensation, that two duchesses, three marchionesses, four countesses, one royal duke, eight Lord Johns and Lord Williams, and four-and-twenty bran-new baronets, laughed themselves into hysterics. This was not to be borne; and accordingly Mr. Rush Tymmons, after sitting up all night and quaffing two draughts of Moxon's effervescing magnesia, produced the following (what he called) smashing epigram, and inserted it anonymously in the "Triverton Independent," — headed by the following little *affiche*

"ON THE LATE BUFFONERY AT CAMPFIELD."

O what must the Tories, Miss Simmonses, feel,
To see you so roughly can handle their *Peel* !
Every hope of success from their faction must fade,
When all they can get is such *poor Orange aid* !

This brilliant and razor-like piece of satire was rewarded by Mr. Rush's paternal perpetrator with a 5*l.* note ! and by his justly proud mother

with a very elegant double-gilt chain ; but the injured Simmonses, the victims of this Cassius-like attack—which had made such a noise in the printing-office of the Triverton Independent, and in their own breakfast-room, never dreamt—never suspected—never imagined, for a moment, the hated quarter from whence it had emanated—for they met the Tymmonses as usual at church or elsewhere—with the same zero bows and curtseys as ever—and the Waterloo-blue coach never passed the green fly without their respective occupants smiling prussic acid at each other.

Now Miss Mac Screw was too much a woman of the world ever to care more for one person than another, let her have received what kindness she might from them, socially or politically ; she had no idea of the corrupt system of assisting anybody. “ *Sibi quemque cavere oportet*,” was her motto. Nevertheless, with all this world of impartiality to range through, which her El Dorado in the Three per Cents. enabled her to do without offending any one—yet she was sometimes puzzled when circumstances compelled her to exert her *congé d’élire* ; for if the Simmonses took her twice running to some tea-party where the Tymmonses were not going, she invariably found that she had a dinner the less that week at the Tym-

monses, or *vice versâ* ; then, on the other hand, there was more in the longrun to be got out of the Simmonses, for they remained at Blichingly all the year round, whereas the Tymmonses regularly went every year six weeks to Margate, and empty houses give no dinners ; but then, to be sure, their cousin, the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins, sent her regular supplies of poultry, game, fish, and vegetables, and consequently they were not to be offended, though, as she observed in confidence to Mrs. Simmons, such presents were very expensive, as they entailed upon one the necessity of a fire to dress them ; for which reason, as soon as she received them, she generally sent them down to Mrs. Simmons with “ her compliments, and that if they dined at home she would herself look in at five o’clock ! ” which was always answered with, “ they should be delighted to see Miss Mac Screw at five precisely, or at one to luncheon, if she was not better engaged. Now the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins thought, by a parity of reasoning, that as Miss Mac Screw never rejected his presents, she could not possibly reject himself ; but his conclusions were drawn from false premises—for she not only refused him, but, upon his proposing for her a third time, forbade him her house, or even to make his appearance

in Lavender-lane; to which he replied, with chivalric gallantry, that his heart should be laid up in lavender for her, till her cruelty relented sufficiently to accept it. How could she refuse him, “for, take him for all in all, she ne’er would look upon his like again!” His face was a dark copper colour, very long and very square; his hair grizzled, short, and rampant, like a scrubbing-brush that “had done its duty, and had done no more;” his eyes were coffee-coloured and dancing, with butter-cup whites to them; his nose was short, straight, and very thick; his upper lip very long, and his under one fashioned after the model of a pap-boat; his teeth long, yellow, and so projecting that his lips had a sinecure, for they could never meet to transact business, which gave his face the appearance of an eternal grin, even when preaching and discussing the most serious subjects; his figure was colossal, and very high-shouldered, and his limbs were so loosely and jerkily hung, that he gave one the idea of being composed of stray legs and arms: the evolution of bowing he always performed by butting his head forward like a ram, while his body writhed, wriggled, and lashed about like an eel. Such was the man that Miss Mac Screw

had had the self-denial to refuse ; but peace, alas ! is not even for the prudent, nor ease for the economical ! Another attack upon her purse had been recently made by Mr. Herbert Grimstone, through the medium of Mr. Tymmons, to try and borrow two thousand pounds at any percentage, and with every security from her, as it would not do to borrow it from his mother, whom he assured he was brought in free ; and without it he could not, at the next election, stand.

Now, though Miss Mac Screw professed great reluctance to lend money on any terms, yet, from the amplitude of the security Mr. Tymmons advanced on the part of Lord de Clifford, she was on the point of acceding, when an urgent letter from Major Nonplus, written in the plenitude of his friendly zeal to back his friend Herbert's request, contained such a dismal and forcible statement of that gentleman's ruined fortune and baseless prospects, as at once deterred Miss Mac Screw from stirring another step in the business, beyond going back every step she had previously advanced. It was this unexpected and appalling contretemps that had induced Mr. Herbert Grimstone to write to Marseilles, and despatch Captain Datchet (whom he had long known in

his diplomotic capacity to be an excellent secret agent) to Blichingly, to lead the forlorn hope of another attack upon Miss Mac Screw's purse. Accordingly, the morning after his arrival at Lee's cottage saw Captain Datchet, at eight o'clock, on his way to Lavender-lane—not in his rough sailor's costume of the evening before, but in a handsome surtout, lined with fur, French-polished boots, unexceptionable hat and gloves, and his hair flowing gracefully, according to the present fashion, over his ears.

Miss Mac Screw's mansion in Lavender-lane was a yellow brick, two-windowed, three-storied house, the parlour windows of which were defended from the intrusive gaze of street passengers by deep yellow leno blinds, drawn upon white tape, and fastened with tin tacks to each side of the window-frame. Being the first house on the left-hand side of the lane, it had only a right-hand neighbour, which consisted of a small mineral and vegetable emporium, alias a coal-shed, where potatoes, turnips, carrots, oysters, and red-herrings were also sold; next to this was a small public-house, the Magpie and Spoon; next to this again was a still smaller house, with a slate-coloured board between the first-floor windows, in which large yellow letters proclaimed that within was "Miss Grubb's

Seminary for Young Ladies." One more house was next to this, with a worsted stocking thrust through a broken pane of one of the windows on the ground-floor, while the model of a man-of-war for sale graced the other ; and two announcements over the door, of "Mangling done here," and "Matthew Square *teches reeding, riting, and rethmetic* above," completed the row on this side of the street, while those on the opposite side were still unfinished, except one small one, whose lower windows were gracefully festooned with sausages, and the profiles of several pigs, with the torsos of others ; the corner house, next to "the Swinish Multitude," presented a few old phials, and an assurance that the highest price was there given for rags of every description, and which was most likely Miss Mac Screw's inducement for fixing her abode immediately opposite. The clock of a neighbouring church was striking eight as Miles Datchet tugged at the stiff black knocker of Miss Mac Screw's door, till he achieved something like a postman's knock with a postscript to it, being three distinct thumps, at a respectful distance from each other. No sooner had the last sounded, than a Leghorn bonnet and three black holyoaks was seen peering over the yellow blind of the far window, to ascertain

who the intruder could possibly be ; while Sally, the red-headed maid, who could, through the legitimate channel of opening the door, have satisfied her curiosity at once, preferred the circuitous one of going into the area and gazing upwards, to the great risk of a very dirty night-cap taking its departure in the north-east wind to the opposite rag-shop. Even the lady of the coal-shed kept a dustman full two minutes longer than she need have done, opening some oysters that she had selected for his morning's repast, while she took a "lingering look" at Miss Mac Screw's smart visiter. One of the windows of Miss Grubb's "Seminary" was also thrown up, and three heads precipitately appeared, one bob-major with a high-backed comb and long ringlets, which was the head of the school, Miss Grubb herself ; the other two were small editions of Monk Lewis's *Tails of Wonder*, for their length was really surprising : these were two of the "young ladies." In short, the whole street was thrown into commotion by such a visiter at such an hour, and not a countenance but expressed the most intense curiosity and wonder, except those of the pigs in the opposite window. Sally at length shuffled up stairs, and opened the door with one hand, while with the other she gathered her clothes

about her, lest, like the leaves in autumn, they should fall off. Miss Mac Screw never kept a handmaiden more than two or three weeks, for she gave them four shillings a week to find themselves ; consequently, as she observed, they got too much money, and too little to do, which spoiled them, and compelled her frequently to part with them ; therefore Captain Datchet did not know Sally, and Sally did not know him.

“ Pray, my pretty girl,” said he, when he had crossed the threshold, “ is Miss Mac Screw at home ? ”

“ Yes, she is at home,” said the girl, deliberately eying him from head to foot ; “ but I don’t know whether I was to say so, though ; but wait here, and I’ll go and see.” So saying, Sally opened the parlour-door on the right-hand side of the passage, and slamming it after her, left Datchet free to reconnoitre the luxuries around him.

There was neither oilcloth on the hall nor carpets on the stairs, and the boards, which were very dirty, had a fine gravelly feel beneath the feet ; the staircase window was open, a flower-pot was outside it with a withered shrub in it, covered with soot, that looked like a birch-rod in mourning ; a piece of whipcord ran across the window, from which were suspended

two cotton pocket-handkerchiefs, and three pair of cotton stockings of Miss Mac Screw's, bearing very bilious symptoms of the lavatorial skill of Sally. The house itself had a fine zoological smell of live mice. Miss Mac Screw did not keep a cat, "they were such horrid thieves!" And to judge from the shoals of dead wasps and flies in the window-seat, and the rich draperies of cobwebs that hung from the walls, it might be presumed that Miss Mac Screw was much addicted to the interesting study of entomology,—at least Captain Datchet had just come to this conclusion when the parlour-door opened, and Sally stepping out, said, "Your name, please?"

The being followed by Miss Mac Screw, who kept peering through the aperture of the door which Sally held ajar, and who at that moment recognised him, saved him the trouble of answering by popping forward, and saying, "Bless me, Captain Datchet, is that you?—thought you were abroad—thought you were abroad. Come in, won't you?—going to breakfast—going to breakfast. You've breakfasted, of course. Not proper to ask a gentleman to breakfast *tête-à-tête*, you know—*tête-tête*——ha! ha! ha!"

Datchet took the hint from the emphasis on

the *of course*, and said he had breakfasted ; and even had he not, there was no temptation for him to do so here. In a very small, narrow, rusty, iron grate, in which there was a little, low, consumptive fire, that looked like a young lady of eighteen, in as much as it was just beginning to go out, was a small tin shaving-pot with hot water, and which had actually the conceit to attempt the part of a kettle. On a small table near the fire-place was spread an equally arrogant newspaper, that emulated a tablecloth ! On this were placed a cracked blue teacup and saucer, a pewter spoon, a small black teapot, some brown sugar on a small plate, a little milk in a pomatum pot, and a little tea in a broken tumbler : this, with the very stale-looking half of a penny roll, and a very small piece of salt butter, completed the bill of fare of Miss Mac Screw's breakfast.

“ You'll excuse my beginning my breakfast, I'm sure,” said she, “ and we can talk all the same.”

“ O certainly,” said Datchet ; “ I have only a few presents from a young gentleman to give you, which will keep till after breakfast.

“ Presents to give me ! and from a young gentleman ! How very odd—very odd—he ! he ! he !” and Miss Mac Screw's eyes danced and

twinkled like stars with the light left out. She held the one spoonful of tea she always indulged in, suspended over the teapot like the sword of Damocles; and lucky was it that she did so, for by that means there was "one halfpennyworth" of tea saved to her and her heirs for ever; for, before she had time to engulf it in the teapot, the door opened, and Sally entered, her apron thrown over her left hand, and so protecting her finger and thumb, which secured a three-cornered note, while her right hand rested gracefully on her right hip.

"Please, ma'am, here's a note from Mrs. Tymmons, and the footboy waits an answer."

Miss Mac Screw replaced the tea in the cracked tumbler, while she opened and read the note, which ran as follows:—

"DEAR MISS MAC SCREW,

"If you are not better engaged, will you dine and spend the day with us?—that is, come to luncheon at one.

"Yours very sincerely,

"S. TYMMONS."

"My compliments, and I shall be most happy, most happy—and here, Sally, you may

put these things back in the closet, for lunching at one, it is impossible to eat any breakfast, and the Tymmonses would be offended if I did not eat, and I would not offend them for the world, *puir people, puir people.*'

"Certainly, certainly," replied Datchet, for there was not that thing which Miss Mac Screw could have asserted, which at the time being he would not have agreed in ; "and breakfasting at eight, it would be quite impossible to eat at one."

"Now, I'm quite at leisure to attend to you, —quite at leisure to attend to you," said Miss Mac Screw, removing herself from three different chairs during the delivery of this short speech.

"I shall not detain you long," said Datchet, taking a small parcel out of his side-pocket ; "merely a few little keepsakes Mr. Herbert Grimstone begged of me to give you, in case I should happen to pass through Blichingly ; and as I had a little business that made a four-and-twenty hours' visit necessary, I would not go without coming to see you." So saying, he handed her the parcel, which she opened eagerly, and which contained the costly offerings of a very shabby black iron Berlin bracelet, a little three-cornered fichu of Venetian beadwork, a shell necklace, and a Turkish tobacco bag for a

reticule, but which, as its perfume told, had already done duty in its original capacity. If, however, the chief merit of a present consists in its being adapted to the taste or wants of the person to whom it is given, then were Mr. Herbert Grimstone's *cadaux* most appropriate, as they consisted in that species of trumpery in which Miss Mac Screw most delighted, especially coming as it did from abroad ; for having in her younger days once passed three months at Naples with an old aunt, (who had since left her the chief part of her present wealth,) she always talked vertu, and affected the greatest admiration for anything foreign ; and, as may have been seen by the description of the house, had, with that perfect imitation which talent combined with good taste always insures, achieved as dirty a domicile as any of the multitudinous dens in the purlieus of the Chiatamone. Miss Mac Screw's eyes danced and sparkled as she examined the different pieces of trumpery before her, especially the roses and convolvuluses in the bead handkerchief.

"That is Venetian," said Datchet, by way of enhancing its value.

"Ah ! very pretty, very pretty indeed," rejoined Miss Mac Screw, seizing and examining the Berlin kitchen-range looking bracelet, with

that Milesian inverse jumble of ideas common to all who have had the good fortune to have sprung from the

“ First flower of the earth, and first *jim* of the *say*.”

“ So plain and elegant ! You don’t read, Captain Datchet, poetry and romances, and that sort of thing, so you don’t know what I mean ; but you may tell Mr. Grimstone that I shall call it my ‘ Venetian bracelet,’—he ! he ! he ! L. E. L.’s Miss Landon’s —poor Miss Landon’s L. E. L.’s Venetian bracelet, you know.—or rather you don’t know—but he’ll know. All my young friends are very kind in lending me books—lending, you know—lending”—

“ That bracelet is not Venetian though,” interposed Datchet, anxious to prove that Mr. Herbert Grimstone had not confined himself to one solitary country in procuring testimonies of his reminiscences of Miss Mac Screw ; only the necklace and the handkerchief are Venetian, the bracelet is Berlin.”

“ Ó yes, Berlin,” echoed Miss Mac Screw, now intently examining the necklace. “ Berlin—yes ; those are charming carriages—charming carriages, those Berlins they have abroad. But really,” continued she, pushing all her treasures to a little distance from her, and towards

Datchet, on the table that was between them, “ I don’t know that I ought to take these things, the *puir* young man is not perhaps aware that I refused to lend him the money, but I make a rule (in the way of money) neither to borrow nor lend—neither to borrow nor lend—he ! he ! he !—don’t you think I’m right ?”

“ *Decidedly*,” said Datchet, reverentially ; “ and as you never borrow money, I don’t see how people can be so unreasonable as to expect you to lend it. But what do you allude to, may I ask ?” continued he, with a look tessellated with ignorance and innocence.

“ Why, two thousand pounds—two thousand pounds, that Mr. Grimstone wanted to borrow from me.”

“ Indeed !” exclaimed Datchet, starting back theatrically in his chair ; “ may I ask how long ago that was ?”

“ O, about three months ago—three months ago.”

“ Then he certainly knew all about it, for it is not one month ago since he gave me those things for you, with so many kind messages. So you see your refusal has not altered his feelings towards you.”

“ *Puir* young man ! *puir* young man !” blinked Miss Mac Screw ; “ why really, though I make

a point of never lending money, I might have lent it to him ; but—but ruined as he is, and I with so many brothers depending on me—depending on me—it would be madness—madness.”

“ Ruined !” exclaimed Datchet, with well-feigned astonishment, “ there, my dear ma’am, you most assuredly mistake ; a rising young man like him, with high official appointments, the best government patronage, and to all intents and purposes the heir of Blichingly !” (with great emphasis on the last word, for Miss Mac Screw knew the Blichingly rent-roll to a doit)—“ with all due submission to your better judgment, this is as little like a ruined man as need be.”

“ Well, but I thought Lord de Clifford was the heir of Blichingly ?” said Miss Mac Screw.

“ Why, the fact is,” replied Datchet, “ they are alternate heirs ; the tenure rests chiefly on the old lady’s caprice. She may, you know, leave it to whom she pleases, and the chances fluctuate, her two sons never being in favour at once ; but I should say his lordship’s chance was the worst, for, besides having a very good estate of his own, he sees too much of her, and having like herself the devil’s own temper—two of a trade, you know, can never agree—and Mr. Herbert is scarcely ever with her, and lays it on

thicker when he is, which is all in his favour ; but as she must know, after bringing them up as she has done, for all the real love they have for her, if it was not for her money, she might die in a ditch, for the attention they'd pay her."

" Well, but," resumed Miss Mac Screw, unlocking and rummaging in the table drawer for a very large old torn pocket-book, tied round with very dirty tape—" I was told he was ruined by one of his most particular friends—his most particular friends."

" Of course," said Datchet, " when a mischief is to be done, who are ready to go such lengths as one's particular friends ? for knowing all about one, they best know the vital points to stick the injury into ; but as I live," added he, pointing to old Elwes's pinchbeck box, that lay ensconced in the corner of the drawer, " if there is not my old friend the gold box that you fairly, or rather unfairly, did me out of two years ago. Ah, Miss Mac Screw, I'd give the world if I was as sharp at a bargain as you !"

" Oh ! three guineas is a great price—a great price had it been diamonds," screamed Miss Mac Screw, while she still busily poured over the contents of the old pocket-book, which,

unlike some other books, had once been *red*. “O here it is,” cried she, selecting from the heterogeneous mass of old letters, receipts, and extracts from newspapers, a foreign letter directed in a very scrawling hand, and bearing the impress of a dozen different post-marks — “here it is—letter from Major Nonplus—always endorse my letters—always endorse my letters.” So saying, she placed the following document in Datchet’s hands.

“ Geneva, August 23rd, 180—.

“ Dear Miss Mac Screw,—Having met with my friend Grimstone at Paris, (on my way here,) who informed me that he had applied to you to raise the wind against the next Triverton election—as I never lose an opportunity of trying to serve a friend, I must write you a few lines to try and spur on your generosity. The fact is, poor fellow! he is devilish hard up. What with gambling, racing, and a few other pastimes that young men are addicted to—and you know what a capricious old Dust the mother is—so he’s no great things to expect from that quarter; and as to the peer, I firmly believe he is so hampered himself, that he would not, and could not, even go security for him a single shilling; so you see he has nobody

to depend upon but you, to whom we all know money can and ought to be no object and as he has long been looking out for an heiress, I've no doubt of his repaying you with interest—when he gets one; but as all ladies are '*melting away with open charity*,' as my friend Shakspeare has it, I need not impress upon you his deplorable situation. Should he lose his seat, as my friends the Whigs have not yet carried the abolition of imprisonment for debt, though, when one remembers the vital importance its abolition is of to nearly every member of the present Parliament, it is to be hoped for their own sakes, if not for the country's at large, that they will* carry it, and that they will, I have no doubt, for to repeat a compliment which my friend Sarum (though a terrible Tory) could not help paying them the other day, nothing seems too hot or too heavy for them, as their talents *lie* in everything. Wonderful men—wonderful men certainly. When you see him, pray remember me to your brother—I mean my friend the Major in the 44th—whom I hope one of these days to be congratulating as your heir. When I return to England, Mrs. Non-

* The Major was prophetic.

plus and myself will hope to see you down in Berkshire. Mrs. N. is at present in the Tyrol, or would, I'm sure, add her kind regards to those of

“ Dear Miss Mac Screw,

“ Yours faithfully,

“ CHARLES NONPLUS.”

“ P. S. Don't let my friend Grimstone know that I have written to you on this subject, as I should not wish him to think he was under any obligation to me.”

“ Ha ! ha ! ha ! then I think you had better let him know it instantly, if that is the Major's object,” said Datchet.

“ But by that letter you see he is quite ruined — quite ruined,” shrugged Miss Mac Screw.

“ Yes, yes,” laughed Datchet, “ I perceive that that letter is quite enough to ruin any man ; “ however,” continued he, “ so far from his lordship's not going security for his brother, I have at this moment a letter from him to his man of business in London, Mr. Lyeall, of the firm of Lyeall, Quibble, and Shuffleton, authorising them to give the most ample security to whoever may advance the money, with a

guarantee to repay the principal in three years, if required; and as I intend borrowing the money from an elderly lady, a friend of my own, I have Mr. Herbert's orders to pay the first year's interest in advance. I know the lady has as great a dislike as yourself, Miss Mac Screw, to lending money, (and very properly,) but really Mr. Herbert, in the event of his return, intends doing things in such a princely style, that it would be a thousand pities, for the want of such a paltry sum, he should not be returned; and I'm sure all the ladies ought to do all they can for him, for, as he says himself, members make a great fuss about poor laws, and factories, and municipal reform, and corporations, and their constituents; but they never seem to remember how much those constituents are influenced by the female portion of the community. Why then, as he very justly says, should not their interests, that is, their pleasure and amusement, be more attended to by members who have the honour to represent their husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, uncles, cousins, nephews, brothers-in-law, fathers-in-law, grandsons, and grand-nephews? And what he proposes would be to give a ball every month for the six winter months, and have Gunter from London

(all at his own expense) to arrange and provide the supper, while any of the inhabitants of Triverton and its vicinity might send for the fragments the next day."

During this harangue, which Datchet uttered with inconceivable rapidity, as though he feared his risible muscles would give way if he paused on a single sentence, Miss Mac Screw had transferred herself to every seat in the room, crossing and re-crossing her legs alternately. At length, when Datchet had finished speaking, and was very diplomatically rising to depart, she repeated —

"Hem, good security, eh!—good security, and principal to be repaid in three years—first year's interest in advance—a hundred pounds—a hundred pounds—great sum—great sum—did you say ball and supper every month—every month, captain?"

"Yes, I believe that is his intention," replied Datchet, carelessly moving towards the door, upon the handle of which he now placed his hand, adding, "Well, good morning, ma'am, I fear I shall not have time to look in upon you again before I go."—

"A-hem! hem!—stop a minute, captain—a-hem! may I ask if you are positively engaged to the elderly lady you mentioned, about

the money ? I—I—mean, *must* you absolutely borrow it from her and no one else ?”

“ Why,” said Datchet, listlessly, looking up at a cobweb over the door, and removing his right foot into the hall as he spoke, “ as I said before, she was at first very reluctant to lend it ; but she thinks it a thousand pities that so gallant a young man, who has all the ladies’ welfare so much at heart, should not be returned ; so I think she is now anxious to do so ; but I am not farther bound to her than having spoken to her on the subject, which is not yet decided, for I am to write by to night’s post to Messieurs Lyeall, Quibble, and Shuffleton——”

“ Well, now, really,” said Miss Mac Screw, “ I don’t think you are in the least bound to her ; and I—I should like to oblige Mr. Grimstone myself, poor young man ; it was so pretty of him sending me those things after I had refused him—refused him the money, you know—the money. And such young men like him, who give balls and suppers, and that sort of thing, ought to be encouraged ; better for the county—better for the county, if there were more such in Parliament : so suppose you borrow it from me instead of the other lady ?”

Datchet gave a shake of the head to which Lord Burleigh’s was nothing, as he replied, in

a slow, desponding tone of voice—"Why, I don't exactly know that I can do that: however," added he, more briskly, as though he were determined to brave all things to oblige Miss Mac Screw, "I'll see what can be done, and let you know in a day or two; so good-bye for the present—but, no," continued he, returning, "to-morrow is foreign post-day, and I must write to Mr. Herbert, telling him that I have got the money; so that if I do it at all, I must close with you now. But, really, Miss Mac Screw, I am half afraid; for besides having to get rid of the old lady, which may not be so easy, perhaps Mr. Herbert's pride would be hurt at taking it from you, after having refused him once before. Well, it can't be helped—it must be so, I suppose," said he, taking off his gloves and walking to the table, on which he placed them and his hat—"see what scrapes you ladies are always bringing us unfortunate men into!"

"No scrapes at all—no scrapes at all," said Miss Mac Screw, her eyes dancing, and her body popping up and down like the hammers of a piano; "I think you said the first year's interest in advance—first year's interest in advance?"

"I did," said Datchet, taking from his pocket a large well-filled pocket-book.

"Oh! well, perhaps you'll just write a little

memorandum for the satisfaction of all parties —of all parties, you know, till I get the proper instrument from Mr. Lyeall;" saying which, Miss Mac Screw opened the table-drawer, to look for the back of a letter for the purpose, but every one was already filled with divers interesting reminiscences. Two very dingy-looking novels were on the mantelpiece; she opened them, in the hope of finding a fly leaf, but, like her ancestors, they "had gone before;" nothing now remained but to go into the passage and scream for Sally, who, when she appeared, was ordered to run down to the De Clifford Arms; and borrow a sheet of paper from Mrs. Stokes. "And here," added Datchet, giving the nymph of the scarlet locks and zoneless waist a sovereign and five shillings—"stop at Jackson the stationer's, and bring me a five-and-twenty shilling stamp."

"Be I to pay all this money for a slip of paper?" asked Sally, her eyes and mouth opening to an equal width.

"You be," replied Datchet, laughing; "so off with you, and don't let the grass grow under your feet."

As soon as Sally was gone, Miss Mac Screw entered into a sprightly conversation with Captain Datchet touching Mr. Herbert Grimstone's

matrimonial prospects. "Well, but about this heiress that Major Nonplus mentions; I hope that is not as false as anything else he stated?"

"I really don't know, but think it more likely to be true than most of the worthy major's statements."

"He! he! he! should like to see Mr. Herbert in love! it would be so funny—so funny. Suppose he'd have to look melancholy, and sigh 'heigh ho!' like any other lover?"

"I've no doubt," said Datchet, laughing, "that if he was making love, particularly to an heiress, he would with truth sigh *I owe!*" but fearing the amiable spinster might detect the latent meaning of his pun, he quickly changed the subject to that strictly national one, the weather, when Miss Mac Screw, after having echoed all his opinions thereupon for the space of three minutes, suddenly exclaimed, "Apropos des bottes — short accounts make long friends, you know—long friends—and to save time, I'll make out Mr. Herbert's little account to me."

"Mr. Herbert's little account to you!" said Datchet, with unaffected surprise: "why, I was not aware that he owed you anything till he borrows the two thousand pounds."

"Oh, only a few little things—a few little

things ;” and taking up a small piece of common house-slate, a fragment of which served for a pencil, Miss Mac Screw scratched down the following items, and read them out as she wrote.

“ Letter from Mr. Herbert, from Paris, asking for the money, 2s. 8d.

“ Letter on Mr. H.’s business — business, you know—that is not betraying that the letter was from Major Nonplus, as he did not wish him to know it, 2s. 11d.

“ And as I have no doubt Mrs. Stokes will eventually make me pay for the sheet of paper I have sent for, I’ll put paper on Mr. H.’s business, 1d.

“ Which just makes it—let me see—

£	s.	d.
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0	2	8
---	---	---

0	2	11
---	---	----

0	0	1
---	---	---

0	5	8
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“ Five-and-eight-pence exactly !”

This was almost too much for Captain Datchet’s gravity. However, with the assistance of his pocket-handkerchief and an artificial fit of sneezing, he was enabled to take out his purse

with tolerably gravity, and present Miss Mac Screw with six shillings, adding that he had no halfpence.

“Oh! well, I dare say there will be more sheets of paper wanted before the business is over, and the odd fourpence will do to pay for it, you know—pay for it.”

Scarcely had Datchet given his unqualified assent to this provident assertion, before Sally returned, bearing the stamp within the sheet of paper, and the sheet of paper within three inches of white-brown paper, which in its turn was placed within Sally’s forefinger and thumb.

“Please, ma’am,” panted Sally, “Mrs. Stokes says as how the next time you wants a sheet of paper, you’ll find Jackson’s the stationer’s ten doors nearer nor the De Clifford Arms.”

“Haven’t I told you,” said Miss Mac Screw, snatching the paper out of Sally’s hand, “never to bring me any messages, unless it is an invitation to dinner or to tea, or anything of that sort, but never from those sort of people? There, that will do, you may go. Now you are sure,” continued Miss Mac Screw, turning to Datchet, as soon as Sally had closed the door—“you are sure that the security is unexceptionable?”

“Oh! not better in England, of which Messrs. Lyeall, Quibble, and Shuffleton will

clearly satisfy you ; and as for the principal, here is a promissory note of Mr. Herbert's, filled up with all but the lender's name, agreeing to repay it in three years if required, for which his brother makes himself responsible."

Miss Mac Screw took the note, turned it, and looked at it in every possible direction, thereby evincing her sagacity ; for Mr. Herbert Grimstone was so innately classical, that upon Cicero's authority he adopted the old Roman double and antithetical meaning of the word promise, which was with him, as it had been with them, at one and the same time both *promittere* and *recipere*.

" Well," said she, " apparently satisfied with the examination, " I'll give you a bill on my bankers, at two months after date—after date, you know—which will be more convenient than after sight."

" No comparison," responded Datchet, as Miss Mac Screw, preparatory to the operation, emptied a little water out of the before mentioned shaving-pot, into a cracked egg-cup, that contained some dried-up ink ; and Datchet having mended the old stump, which had once been a pen, Miss Mac Screw proceeded with a trembling hand to fill up the stamp with—

“ October 10th, 180—.

“ Messieurs Tugwell and Holdfast,—Please to pay to my order, two months after date, to Mr. Herbert Grimstone, or bearer, the sum of two thousand pounds, for value received.

“ LAVINIA MAC SCREW.

“ To Messrs. Tugwell and Holdfast, bankers,
No. ———, Fleet Street, London.”

“ Now, I’ll just keep this till I get Mr. Lyeall’s letter. When will that be?” added Miss Mac Screw, carefully locking up the bill.

“ Why, if I write by to-day’s post, as I shall do,” said Datchet, “ you will hear from him the day after to-morrow. And now for the first year’s interest.” Saying which, he counted out five ten pound and ten five pound notes, which he handed to Miss Mac Screw, who got into an additional trepidation, requesting to know if he could not give it to her in fewer notes, for that it was so very, very dangerous walking up High Street with so much money, which she must do, to deposit it in the Blichingly Bank.

“ O, yes, I can give you two fifty pound notes instead,” said Datchet.

“ Thank you—that is much more convenient,” said Miss Mac Screw, untying her Leghorn Golgotha, and carefully pinning the two fifty pound notes in the crown of it with a very large pin, which from long and constant wear shone out in all its brazen glory, and added to the already various decorations of that immortal bonnet.

“ Well, once more good-bye, ma’am !” said Datchet, buttoning his coat carefully over his pocket-book, “ and remember, if I get into any scrape with Mr. Herbert about taking this money from you, you must bear me harmless.”

“ Yes, yes, I’ll bear you harmless,” giggled Miss Mac Screw, nodding her head, which was all the better for the additional hundred pounds she had got in it; but I’m sure Mr. Herbert is too gallant to be angry with a lady—you know a lady ——”

“ Well, I don’t think there is much chance of his being angry with you, or even me, on the present occasion,” said Datchet, as he walked into the hall to conceal his laughter, which, however, he could not indulge even there, as he was closely followed by Miss Mac Screw, who always officiated as her own porter, and opened the street-door. No sooner had she done so on

this eventful morning, than a huge black cat rushed into the hall, carrying a herring in its mouth, which it had just purloined from the neighbouring coalshed. In its anxiety to cover its retreat, it rushed between Miss Mac Screw's feet, thereby greatly endangering her equilibrium; but she supported herself against the wall, and with great presence of mind cried out, "Sally—Sally—stop that horrid cat!" Now, luckily for Miss Mac Screw, but unluckily for the cat, Sally was coming up stairs at the time, and did as her mistress desired her, when that lady sprang forward, and forcibly wrested the herring from the cat's mouth, which she had no sooner done than she let the lawless marauder loose upon society again, by allowing him to pursue his way without further molestation through the staircase window, which when he had done, Miss Mac Screw made over the herring to Sally's custody, with orders to dress it immediately; "And then, Sally, put it by, for I am exceedingly fond of cold fish—exceedingly fond—and it will do for my luncheon to-morrow—hate cats — they are such horrid thieves — horrid thieves!"

"Humph!" thought Datchet, as he wended his way out of Lavender-lane, and who had

been exceedingly amused at the whole scene—
“ they say one should always hear both sides of
the question ; and I dare say, if the cat could
speak, he would say you were a horrid thief,
and I’ve no doubt he would be able to make
out his case very clearly.”

CHAPTER V.

“ Not that the thing was either rich or rare,
They only wonder’d how the d——l it got there.”

“ Yes, I have said it—love, madam—life and death lie in
your tongue.”

SCHILLER’S FIFSCO, *translated by G. H. N. and J. S.*

“ Who, tho’ they’ve been fierce foes before,
Soon as *the cause* is done and o’er,
Shake hands, and then are foes no more.”

OLD LAWYERS.

AFTER Datchet’s departure, Miss Mac Screw had just time to complete a demi-toilette for the day, which consisted of a soft, thick, yet thin muslin dress, which had once been white, with sundry pyramidical flounces, and which “clung round her like a lover,” surmounted by a blue cloth spencer, with a very tight back and equally tight sleeves, when Mrs. and Miss Tymmons drove to the door in the green fly, thinking “it would be pleasanter to *dear* Miss Mac Screw to

drive," or, as they said, to *ride*, "than to walk, as she might have some shopping to do before she came to them."

"Oh, very lucky, very lucky!" said the fair Lavinia, as she wedged herself in between fat Mrs. Tymmons—"for I want to go to the Bank, not to leave or get any money—not to get any money—but just to ask a question—a question, you know."

Nature could not have well invented two greater personal contrasts than Miss Mac Screw and Mrs. Tymmons, for the latter rejoiced in a form of infinite rotundity, with a face like a full moon in a scarlet fever, and eyes pale, mild, and full as bottled gooseberries. Mrs. Tymmons had been a blonde, and consequently had subsided into a bay-wig, with little fat round shiny curls, that looked like capillary forced-meat balls. Having got into the habit of presenting Mr. Tymmons with an annual miniature of himself, she had acquired the appearance of always being in that interesting situation, even during the three intermediate months; consequently Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons were the happy parents of what, in England, is called "a fine family,"—that is, half a dozen sons and daughters, one uglier than another. Miss Tymmons was, in spite of her *ponçeau*-coloured

hair, considered by her parents, and indeed by every one in Blichingly except the Sommonses, a very *genteel* (!) girl; for she sat very uprightly on her chair, never had a crease upon any of her clothes, scarcely ever spoke, and never laughed at anything that she heard or read, for fear it should not be proper, and had forbidden her brothers (with whom she was an oracle) to read the *Pickwick* papers, because, as she said, they were so “very low and ungenteel,” and for her part she could not conceive why people thought them so clever. She had only two brothers at home;—Mr. Rush Tymmons, who, as we have already stated, was all poetry, pensiveness, and peculiarity, being the genius of the family; Mr. Joseph, on the contrary, being destined to follow his father’s calling, was the man of business. In proportion as Mr. Ruth was tall and thin, he was fat and short, with nice fat, sleek-looking, dark-brown hair, like the ears of a pointer pup, and a face between a cherubim’s and a trumpeter’s, only his whiskers standing boldly out like wings made it rather more approximate to the former.

Mrs. Joseph Tymmons’s only peculiarity was attending every wedding that took place within ten miles round, no doubt to study how he was to comport himself against the time when he should

act a principal part at one, for he made it a point to propose to every young lady he danced with twice, and had thereby obtained the title of "Solicitor General," which his sire looked upon as a lucky professional omen. Mr. Tymmons, senior, requires no separate description, for he was whatever his wife and daughters pleased; and his dress, which was the principal part of him, consisted, all the year round, of a snuff-coloured coat, mud-coloured breeches, and gaiters of the same, except in full dress, when it was exchanged for a blue coat, gilt buttons, white waistcoat, and black breeches. The three younger Miss Tymmons were not remarkable for anything beyond the way their hair kept in curl in all weathers, and the constancy with which they talked of "the officers," there being generally a detachment of cavalry quartered at Triverton, and the promptitude with which they wrote to London for the "Key" (!) of every fashionable novel that came out, and got the names by heart. So much for Miss Maria, Sarah, and Isabella Tymmons. The remaining scions consisted of Master Grimstone Tymmons, aged four, who did as much mischief, ate as much apple-pudding, and accumulated as many scratched faces, as any young gentleman of the same tender years,—to say nothing of

his exercising a truly manly degree of embryo bashawism over his younger sister, Miss Barbara Tymmons, who not yet being able to walk, had no means of running away from his persecutions, and could therefore only defend herself from them, by proving, with the perfectionised skill of eighteen months' practice, that her lungs were perfectly sound. Scarcely had the fly crawled out of Lavender-lane, before Mrs. Tymmons began panting, and patting her sides with sundry affectionate pats of her little fat hands.

“ My dear *Mith* Mac Screw,” lisped she at last, in a most humble and imploring voice, “ would it be too much for you if I had a bit of the fly open ? it is so very close.”

“ O dear no, should like it of all things—these hard times glad to raise the wind, you know—raise the wind—he ! he ! he !”

Now Mrs. Tymmons knew that Miss Mac Screw never tittered at the end of one of her own speeches, without meaning to let people know that she had said something which she thought witty ; so accordingly Mrs. Tymmons laughed, and said, “ Very good, very good indeed, Miss Mac Screw ;” but Miss Tymmons looked even more grave than usual, for she did not think it was “ *genteel*” to talk about wind,

and raising the wind she thought a particularly “*ungenteel*” expression.

“Seraphina, my love,” said her mother, “just put your head out of the window, and tell *Aloncho* to stop and open the carriage.”

Seraphina did as she was desired, but exactly in the low, faint, inaudible voice that might naturally be supposed to issue from a fly—consequently Alonzo did not hear.”

“Never mind, love, I’ll call to him,” said Mrs. Tymmons, squeezing her bust through the window, and screaming at the top of her voice, “*Aloncho, Aloncho, Aloncho!* you stupid oaf, are you deaf?”

“Yes, ma’am,” said Alonso, pulling up; but whether in answer to the sound or the sense of his mistress’s interrogation is not known.

“Open a bit of the carriage,” resumed Mrs. Tymmons.

“Yes, ma’am,” said Alonso, thumping away with a stone at the obstinate hinges of the fly, which, however, at length yielded, after undergoing, for ten minutes, as much martyrdom as St. Stephen; a strip of the fly was opened, and a slice of air let in, much to the relief of Mrs. Tymmons, who drew one long breath previous to telling Alonso to drive to the bank. No sooner had they arrived there

than Miss Mac Screw got into a terrible flutter, assuring them she would not be a minute, and therefore begging that neither of them would take the trouble of accompanying her. Alighting from the fly, she made a precipitate rush into the bank, which to her great satisfaction contained nobody but the clerk, who seeing Miss Mac Screw, and knowing that her usual demand was from three to five pounds, got both sums ready.

“Don’t want money to-day—come to leave money, come to leave money,” said she, hopping up to his desk, and beginning to untie her bonnet, which, however, was a work of some little time and trouble, she having tied it in a multitude of knots for further security. At length the last was undone, and the poor clerk could with difficulty keep his countenance, when he beheld Miss Mac Screw’s monk-like coiffeur, her head being perfectly bald, and her forehead alone decorated with the tufts of dusty black curls. “Here,” said she, unpinning the two fifty pound notes, and placing them before the clerk, while she looked cautiously round to see that no one was looking or listening—“here, you see how much it’s for,” pointing to the amount, for she would not breathe it for the world lest it might be overheard, “and

you'll give me a receipt for it—quick, if you please, quick.”

“ You have a fine clear head for business, ma'am,” said the clerk, with a half smile, glancing at her bald pate, as he removed the pen from behind his ear to write the receipt, which he no sooner handed to her than it was pinned in the same place that its predecessors, the fifty pound notes, had previously occupied, and Miss Mac Screw shuffled out of the bank even faster than she had shuffled into it. “ Sorry to have kept you so long,” said she, scrambling into the fly, “ but these people at country banks are so stupid, there's no getting an answer from them—no getting an answer from them.”

“ I'm sure you've not been at all long,” said Mrs. Tymmons—has she, Seraphina?”

“ By no means,” dulcified Seraphina.

“ Where to now, Miss Mac Screw?” inquired Mrs. Tymmons, as Alonso stood holding the brim of his hat with his whip-hand, to the great risk of putting out his right eye.

“ O, there is a cheap shoemaker's in Silver-street—I mean he is poor, poor you know, and it's a charity to deal with poor people, and he's selling off, you know—selling off—his name is White, he has some shoes of mine to alter—to

alter—I should to like to go and see if they are done.”

“Go to White’s, the shoemaker in Silver-street.”

“Yes, ma’am,” said Alonso, ascending the box, and urging on the reluctant steed.

“Hope I’m not taking you out of the way though—out of the way?” said Miss Mac Screw.

“Not in the *leathst*,” responded Mrs. Tymmons; I’m *thure* we’re alwayth happy to be of any *uthe* to you, Mith Mac Screw.”

Suddenly the fly stopped, “*Whath’s* the matter?” screamed Mrs. Tymmons.

“Nothing ma’am,” said Alonso, stretching over his body and looking down through the aperture in the fly, “only they’re mending the street, and I can’t get up.”

“Dear, dear, how very *tirethome*,” cried Mrs. Tymmons; “would you mind walking as far as the shoemaker’s, my dear *Mith* Mac Screw?”

“Not in the least, not in the least,” said that accommodating lady; accordingly the three graces descended from the fly, and walked up Silver-street, till they got to the shoemaker’s, which was the last shop in the street.

“Are my shoes done, Mr. White?” asked Miss Mac Screw, hobbling into the shop.

“Why, ma’am,” said Mr. White, who was busily employed pasting some bills, and evidently in all the chaos of removing, “one of them has been mended so often that I really could not make a job of it at all, but I’ll let you have a new pair very cheap, as I am selling off.”

“What do you call very cheap? All an excuse for not mending the others—all an excuse; tradespeople always impose upon one—always impose upon one.”

“Why, ma’am,” replied Mr. White, totally disregarding the compliment to himself and his order, “five shillings I call very cheap.”

“O shocking! dreadful!” screamed Miss Mac Screw, throwing herself into a chair; “sha’n’t give you any such thing—robbery, perfect robbery; but give me some shoes to try?”

Now it was not to be expected that Miss Mac Screw could even contemplate disbursing so large a sum as four or five shillings, without taking all due precautions to ascertain which pair of Mr. White’s shoes could possibly be worth such a sum; accordingly she spent full half an hour in balancing between their con-

tending claims: it so happened, as we have before stated, when the three ladies entered the shop, that Mr. White was busy pasting bills, which were, in fact, no other than announcements that his shop was to be let, contained in the words, "To be disposed of, inquire of the proprietor," in large printed letters, and, in his hurry to attend to his customers, he put the last bill he had pasted aside, by placing it, with the pasted side upwards, on the back of a chair. Unfortunately it was into this very chair Miss Mac Screw had flung herself, and leaning back for so long a period as half an hour, the aforesaid bill, meeting no impediment in the very flat surface of her tight-backed spencer, had ample time, not only to adhere, but to dry upon her back. "Well," said she, rising at length, "send me this pair to-morrow morning, but remember I sha'n't give you anything like five shillings."

Mrs. and Miss Tymmons had walked out of the shop. Mr. White walked side by side with Miss Mac Screw, protesting he could not let her have the shoes for less; so that poor Miss Mac Screw joined her friends in the street without the remotest idea that she was enacting the part of the "Public Advertiser," till she heard the "hue and cry" her appearance

occasioned. Shouts of laughter greeted her as she passed along, while, to add to her astonishment, all the faces she met were perfectly grave; but behind her the tumult was increasing every minute; till at length she was surrounded by a mob of boys, hooting and yelling, with pocket-handkerchiefs tied on sticks, which they waved over her like flags. One cried out, "How much do you ask for yourself, old money spinner?" while another answered, "They say she's worth a plum, but I would not give two-pence for her;" and a third screamed still louder, "No, no, the debentures are all very well; but any one may have the *personals* for me."

Poor Miss Mac Screw turned and twisted, and twisted and turned; but the more she turned, the more the mob laughed and shouted; and in one of her turnings Mrs. and Miss Tymmons discovered the cause of all their mirth. The former nearly went into hysterics on the spot; and Miss Seraphina would have made it a point to faint, but that she providentially remembered, just as she was going off against a lamp-post, that she had somewhere read in one of her favourite fashionable novels that there was nothing so vulgar as making a scene, even let the provocation be

what it might; accordingly she returned to the perpendicular, and looked immovable. At this crisis, who should pass along the opposite side of the street but the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins? True, a gulf yawned between him and his Lavinia, of scattered mould and upturned stones, while within the deep abyss were gas-pipes black and bare as the phantoms of a German forest. What of this?

“ Love’s heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glide than the sun’s beams;
Driving back shadows over low’ring hills.
Therefore do nimble-pinion’d doves draw Love,
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.”

Wherefore, this being the part Mr. Hoskins determined to act, the air in the narrow street became suddenly darkened, as it were, with long black legs and arms, rustling like the wings of the glums and glowries, as the fascinating Peter flung himself across the street to the rescue of his “ ladye love,” and with one magic incantation, performed by a circular movement of his walking-stick above their heads, and a quickly uttered spell, in which the words beadle, treadmill, and stocks, were the only ones audible, the mob evaporated instantaneously.

“ Bless me !” said Miss Mac Screw, backing into a shop, in which she and her companions all took refuge, “ is that you, Mr. Hoskins? you know I never was to speak to you again—never was to speak to you again ; but, as the proverb says, misfortune brings one acquainted with strange ——”

“ Bedfellows,” achieved Peter, floundering through one of his most gallant bows, and grinning like a face over a hall-door.

“ Will you be so good as to tell me,” said Miss Mac Screw, first feeling one of her arms, and then the other, as though anxious to ascertain beyond a doubt her own identity, “ now that you have got rid of those odious wretches—what they were all hooting and yelling about, and following me?—me, of all people in the world, who for the last ten years have been in the habit of walking through Blichingly, from morning till night, without ever being followed by any one.”

Mr. Hoskins spoke in a broad northern accent, always saying booke, for book ; augh, for I ; vagabone, for vagabond ; with several other little elocutionary gems that gave a brilliancy and zest to everything he uttered. So, casting a retrospective glance at the placard on Miss Mac Screw’s back, he replied, wriggling through another bow—

“Augh raley don’t know, unless it is the tempting notice ye have pasted on yer bock—‘To be disposed of, inquire of the proprietor;’ and I can only assure ye, Miss Mac Screw, that I *hop* to find myself first on the list of applicants for so valuable and desirable a property.”

“All you are saying may be very witty and clever, I have no doubt—very witty and clever; but as I do not understand one word of it, I’ll thank you to speak in plain English—plain English,” said Miss Mac Screw, drawing up with the tyrannical air of a coquettish young beauty

“My dear *Mith* Mac Screw,” cried Mrs. Tymmons, coming to her kinsman’s assistance, “*ith a motht* unfortunate *conter-tong*, (Mrs. Tymmons was in the habit of speaking French with the dowager Lady de Clifford,) but when you were at White’s you leant against a chair that had one of hith billths on the back of it, and it stuck to your spenther, thath all, and the mob theeing it, followed uth, and hooted ath they did, and it ith to that bill my couthin alludes.”

“O dear, how very dreadful, shocking, terrible! Sh’ant pay White any thing for the shoes after his having those horrid bills,—and shall never enter his vile shop again, for fear he should do something worse to me.”

“*Ne sutor ultra crepidam,*” muttered Hoskins.

“What’s that? what’s that?” asked Miss Mac Screw.

“Augh was saying augh defy him to go beyond his *last* act of atrocity, and augh think yer quite right in yer resolve of never entering his shop again after such a bill; for though one ought always be ready to *meet* a bill, yet augh declares it’s not pleasant to be endorsed in this way oneself, as it does not get one *honoured at sight*; and Peter’s teeth protruded more than ever, as he passed his hand over his mouth to hide an ill-timed grin at his own bad puns.

“A-hem! Miss Seraphina, my dear, do be so good as to take that odious bill off my back—off my back; looks so shocking, you know—so shocking.”

Miss Seraphina tried and tried, but the obstinate paper would only come off by instalments.

“I cannot get it all out, I fear,” said she, in a languid voice, tired of her exertions.

“Augh doubt it’s a difficult matter to get ony thing out of her,” muttered Peter *sotto voce*, walking to the door to hide another grin.

“I think,” interrupted Mrs. Tymmons, sympathisingly, “my couthin had better go to the carriage for your shawl, Mith Mac Screw?”

Peter waited for no further orders, but rushed out of the shop like a whirlwind, and strode down the street *à la monstre* in Frankenstein, till he reached the fly, and Alonso handed him out Miss Mac Screw's variegated lambswool garment, with which he returned at the same speed. When he entered the shop, he flung himself on one knee, and said, in a theatrical tone, as he presented it to its owner, "How augh envy this happy shawl, to cover so much beauty and grace!"

"Nonsense, perfect nonsense; you either take me for a fool, or are mad—quite mad," said Miss Mac Screw, gathering the friendly worsted rainbow tightly round her, and walking out of the shop.

"'Twas your beauty made me so, then," persisted Peter, walking by her side and bowing over his hands, which he had first placed on his heart, while his sharp and bony elbows stood out in fine relief, like the handles of an Etruscan case. "It's to be hoped," continued he, "that ye'll let me see ye safe *hom*; for ye see the dangers a lone woman is exposed to."

"No dangers at all—no dangers at all. Dine at Mr. Tymmons's—dine at Mr. Tymmons's."

"Maugh I never eat another dinner if augh don't dine there too!" chuckled Peter, with un-

put-down-able and un-offend-able gallantry ; “ for augh’m sure my cousin Sarah there would never be so inhospitable as to shut her doors upon a relation with such a *fule* heart and empty stomach as augh am suffering from at this moment.”

“ Why, my dear Peter, you know the way we are thituated,” said Mrs. Tymmons, shaking her head ; “ conthider our small” (Anglice, large) “ family ; and you know it would be ath much ath all Mithter Tymmons’s other practith ith worth, to offend old Lady de Clifford ; and if she wath to hear that we athked you to dinner, I don’t know what the conthequence might be, particularly after her standing god-mother to Barbara.”

“ Augh think yer very right not to ask me to dinner, if you think it would offend the auld duchess, and lose ye anything ; but it maks all the difference if I ask myself to dinner. And if auld Lady Overreach should hear of it, why she could only say that it *did great credit to my head and hort*, to wish to be on such friendly terms with my relations.” So saying, Peter, sans ceremonie, leapt into the fly, after depositing Miss Mac Screw and his cousins in it first, and, in a maître-de-la-maison tone, ordered Alonso to drive home—that is, to Mr. Tymmons’s red-

bricked, green-doored, and brass-knocked edifice in High-street, where they had no sooner arrived, than Alonso was ordered by Miss Tymmons to *rap* loud, as there was nothing so “ungenteel” as for a servant to give one of those little, diffident, poor-relation, come-to-borrow-money sort of knocks. Alonso’s appeal was, after some delay, answered by a smart rosy-cheeked maid, all ringlets and blue ribbons, whose clothes Master Grimstone Tymmons was exerting all the strength of one hand to tear off her back, for in the other he held a thick piece of bread and butter, veneered with raspberry jam; his mouth being also full of the same horticultural and agricultural condiments, prevented his enforcing his commands by words as explicit and compulsory as he was in the habit of using, which drove him to the argumentum ad hominem, to the great danger of Mary the maid’s chali dress, the gift of Miss Seraphina, as a reward for her having once gone at midnight, and knocked up the people at the library, to get her a novel.

“My dear Grimthtone,” said the fond mother, in a voice so piano that it could not have intimidated a fly, “you really mutht not be tho naughty; now go in, love, do, and you thall pull Ithabella’s hair, if you like.”

“ But Isabella’s paying, and se won’t et me,” bread-and-buttered Master Grimstone.

“ Ah, ye young vagabone !” said Hoskins, striding into the hall, and seizing the unfortunate urchin with both hands by the throat, and suspending him in air, “ come here till I show you London.”

Great but unavailing were the screams of Master Grimstone, as his mother left him to his fate, to open the drawing-room door for Miss Mac Screw. Mrs. Tymmons piqued herself upon her drawing-room. It was a square room, of tolerable dimensions, on the left hand side of the hall, opposite the dining-room and Mr. Tymmons’s study—for Miss Seraphina said it was not genteel to call it an office. From the centre of the drawing-room was suspended an ormolu lamp, with three circular burners, the whole of which was now defended against the flies by a yellow leno bag, as was the frame of the looking-glass, the gilding of Miss Tymmons’s harp, and the frames of the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons, the former of which was represented with an open letter in his hand, with a very large red seal on it, a volume of Blackstone open on a table, with a bundle of papers tied with red tape, and a red morocco spectacle case, (“ Bradbury,” in gilt letters,

upon it,) lying on the Commentaries, while in the back ground hung a purple stuff bag, apparently very full. This graced the space over the looking-glass, and on the opposite wall hung the effigy of Mrs. T., in a black satin gown, with a pointed body, a white blond scarf, and a gold tissue turban. On her lap sat a baby, with a coral and gilt bells, which formed a rich and Titian-like contrast to the *white kid gloves* upon its mother's hands. Papier-maché-looking miniatures of the younger branches of the family graced each side of the chimney-piece ; and one, in especial, of Mr. Algernon Tymmons, who having attained to a company in the Bengal cavalry, his fond mother had had him drawn in full regimentals, blowing the bugle.

Though far advanced in October, no fire dimmed the brazen brightness of the grate ; for Mrs. Tymmons never allowed fires before the first of November—her mother, and grandmother, and great-grandmother before her had never done so, and the weather was, of course, the same now as it had been then ; so instead of fire was suspended, like a curtain before the bars, an elaborate honeycomb of yellow silver paper. The carpet consisted of beautiful drab squares, with bunches of blue flowers upon them, intersected with blue circles and drab bouquets ;

but particularly clean and cold-looking brown holland defended the chief part of its beauties from profane footsteps. The chairs were of course rosewood, covered with blue tabouret cushions and brown holland dressing-gowns, and were ranged so regularly and fixedly along the wall, that they looked as if nothing short of galvanism could move them. Two stiff, hard, boarding-school-looking sofas facsimiled each other at either side of the fireplace. The nic-nackery of the room consisted of divers plates, kettles, and inkstands, intended to imitate old Dresden by large red, orange, blue, and green clumsily-cut flowers, but bearing a much stronger resemblance to the carrot and turnip floral emblems on the hams and tongues at one of Mrs. Tymmons's own dinners. These, with jardinières filled with worsted and cloth dahlias, perforated card-screens, with Berlin work, and little egg-cuppy-looking vases festooned with rice-paper flowers, formed, with the addition of a few annuals, and pens with bead devices, and Hessian-boot-looking tassels at the end of them, the ornamental part of the furniture. At the upper end of the room, with purple nose, and still more purple hands, sat Miss Isabella Tymmons at a grand piano,

thumping out detachments of the Huguenot galope.

“ My dear Bella,” said Mrs. Tymmons, as Miss Mac Screw and Mr. Hoskins seated themselves on one of the Grandisonian-looking sofas, and Mrs. Tymmons received her son from the latter—“ My dear Bella, I’m sure you’ve practithed long enough ; and do let poor Grimmy pull your hair, or do anything to keep him quiet, while I go and speak to your pa on bu-thineth.”

“ Really that child is so spoilt, there is no bearing him,” said Miss Isabella, rising pettishly, and advancing to shake hands with Miss Mac Screw and her cousin Peter.

Leaving the latter to press his suit as he best might, Mrs. Tymmons waddled out of the room “ to see about” luncheon and “ after” her husband. Upon opening the “ study” door, she found her spouse (though only one o’clock) with his legs considerably elongated under the archway of the library table, his hands in the pockets of his small-clothes, his shoulders shrugged up till they supported his ample ears, his under lip much protruded, and widely severed from the upper, while a loud, deep, and sonorous grunting gave unequivocal evidence of his being fast asleep. On one side of the

table lay Tomlin's Law Dictionary, open at *quare impedit*; and before him a letter he was writing to the Dowager Lady de Clifford, over which he had apparently fallen asleep at the following sentence, as it was the last written. "Grantee of a next avoidance may bring this writ against the patron who granted the avoidance—39 Hen. 6."

Mrs. Tymmons glanced her eye over the letter, and then shaking her lord rather roughly, said, "Really, Mitther Tymmons, I think your patron may bring this writ against you, if this is the manner in which you fall asleep over her buthineth; besides, here is Peter Hoskins has insisted upon dining with us, to carry on his nonsense with Miss Mac Screw; and if the old lady should hear of our letting him into the house, after the way in which you have pretended to abuse him to her, I'm sure I don't know what will be the conthequenth."

"Eh, eh?" muttered Mr. Tymmons, "rolling his head more to the left, without however opening his eyes, and letting the words fall, much mutilated, out of his mouth. "Pleas in bar, such as a release, the statute of limitations, agreement with satisfaction, &c. &c., destroy the plaintiff's action for ever; but pleas in abatement are temporary and dilatory, and do

not destroy the action,—only stop the cause for a while, till the defect is removed. Take away the mutton, and bring the goose — d——d tough, Mrs. T.—d——d tough! Send those children out of the room. The general issue of general plea is what traverses, thwarts, and denies at once the whole declaration, without offering any special matter whereby to evade it. As in a trespass, either *vi et armis*, or ——”

“Mithter Tymmons!” screamed his better half, shaking him so roughly by the arm, that his throat rattled as though he were dying, and he opened one eye very widely, exclaiming, “God bless my soul! what’s the matter?”

“Matter enough, Mr. Tymmons—what a pretty example it ith to your sonths to thee you thleeping away your whole time in thith way!”

Mr. Tymmons now opened both his eyes, removed his hands from the pockets of his unmentionables, stretched them above his head, and gave one loud, long “sleep-no-more sort of yawn. After which, placing his arm round his wife’s waist, and drawing her towards him, said, “Well, ducky, what is it?”

“It is too bad your being fast athleep at thith time of day,” persisted Mrs. Tymmons.”

“Ehem, I never sleep, lovey, when you are

with me," said the tender Tymmons, with a look that would have brought any other man into Doctors' Commons.

"Well, but dear," euphonised Mrs. T., condescendingly seating herself upon his knee, and stroking his fat red cheek, "you really should not thleep in the middle of the day; and I want to speak to you upon buthineth."

"Your business is my pleasure," replied the gallant husband, taking his wife's fat face in both his hands, and imprinting a kiss upon her voluminous lips; "what is it, my lily?"

"Why, here'th Mither Hothkinth inthith upon dining with uth to-day becauthe Miss Mac Screw's here."

"Egad, that's capital," cried Mr. Tymmons, rubbing his hands, "I'll give him every opportunity of winning his bet, though it's against myself; but if he gets the old girl, it will be such a famous thing for the family!"

"Yeth, but while heth talking over the old girl, how will you talk over the old lady?" asked Mrs. Tymmons.

"O, easily enough, leave that to me; I have not been humbugging here these four years, without knowing how to manage her. I must only lay it on a little thicker about her being so exceedingly clever, and having such a wonderful

knowledge of business, abuse Hoskins a little more, and not look too business-like myself, so as to let her think she could easily overreach me; interlard my letters with similes and poetry, and that sort of thing, which Rush can always supply me with, you know, lovey, and then I can knead her like dough."

"Ah, you gentlemen" (for common people never say men and women) "are sad dethievers, sad dethievers," said Mrs. Tymmons, with a most proper wifely look of conscious inferiority, and vivid admiration for the stupendous structure of her husband's masculine intellect.

"Now, lovey," resumed her sposo, drawing his chair close to the table and dipping his pen into the ink, "let me finish my letter to the old lady, and order dinner at half-past four, and be sure we've a bottle of that old Burgundy port that I bought at Lord Cramwell's sale, for Hoskins likes a good bottle of wine as well as any man, and perhaps by dint of it I may get him to suppress that pamphlet about Mary Lee, for it won't do to let him go too great lengths against this family, especially as I have had Richard Brindal with me all the morning, who tells me that Mary Lee positively refuses to marry him, so that scheme has failed; and if every other does too, the old lady may begin

to suspect both my abilities and my allegiance, and that's what must not be. So you must tell Hoskins, ducky, that unless he is content to be more pacific towards the dowager for the future, and moreover to publicly attribute his being so to my remonstrances and interference, he need not expect any trystings with Miss Mac Screw in this house."

"I will, dear," responded Mrs. Tymmons, "moving towards the door."

"And, lovey," cried Mr. T., calling her back, "be sure we have some *souse*, for I am *particklar partial* to *souse*." *

As Alonso was not only charioteer, but "chief butler," the asses could not be fed till the horse was attended to; consequently Mrs. Tymmons had to fuss about for some time before the luncheon was ready, to Miss Mac Screw's no small annoyance, for, being both cold and hungry, the warmth of Mrs. Hoskins's protestations became doubly disagreeable to her; but when luncheon was announced, and he led her into

* As there may be persons in the world as ignorant as I myself was respecting *souse*, till I discovered what it was in an American cookery book that recently came in my way, I think it right to impart the information I then and there acquired, by informing such ignoramuses that *souse* is nothing more nor less than macadamized pig's feet and ears, plunged into a Stygian lake of vinegar, and mummied with spices.

the dining-room, he contrived to transfer such a quantity of cold beef and mashed potatoes to her plate, that in a short time she became not only affable, but facetious, as she crammed herself into good-humour.

“ Now, to prove what stories you tell,” said she to the amiable Peter, her mouth so full as to render her words almost inaudible, “ you say you would do anything if I would marry you—he ! he ! he ! Now the only thing that would make me marry you, I know, you would not, and could not do—he ! he ! he ! ”

“ Name it,” said Peter, gallantly, “ and be it what it may, augh tak my cousin Sarah and the girls to witness that augh’ll do it ; and if ye prefer the promise being legally attested, augh’ll call in Mr. Tymmons ; so just say what it is.”

“ He ! he ! he ! ” tittered Miss Mac Screw, “ you can’t—can’t ; so I’m quite safe—quite safe. You would not play a tune on the fiddle in the midst of one of your sermons, now would you ? ” said she triumphantly.

For a moment Mr. Hoskins’s visage elongated, but soon rallying, he replied, “ Well ! yes, even that augh’ll do ; but augh don’t know if I can pley the feedle, because ye see augh never tried ; and as it may tak me some leetle time to *laren*, augh should like to know how long ye’d give me to do it.”

“ O, till doomsday—till doomsday,” chuckled Miss Mac Screw.

“ Augh declare that sort of *ad græcas calendas* is not fair, and augh think augh ought to insist upon a definite time being named for the match to come off, as they say on the turf,” cried Hoskins.

“ *Moth dethidedly*,” said Mrs. Tymmons and her daughters unanimously, the latter much amused at the trap Miss Mac Screw had got herself into, for they knew their worthy cousin to be a man *capable de tout*.”

“ But,” resumed Mrs. Tymmons, who thought it only prudent not to appear too eager in forwarding her kinsman’s designs, “ you surely never would or could play the violin in the pulpit ; it would be thuch a dithgrathe to a clergyman, and particularly to you who have given uth thuth evangelical dithcourtheth of late.”

“ That’s the *vary* reason,” said Peter, “ augh’ll not only do it, but augh’ll mak it an instrument of great instrooktion to my congregation. Augh don’t see why sarmons may not be foond in feedles as well as stones, and goode in *avery* thing.”

“ He’ll never do it,” whispered Mrs. Tymmons, very diplomatically, to Miss Mac Screw ;

“ he couldn’t, you know it would be quite impossible,” and then added aloud, as if to play off Hoskins, “ Now really, my dear, Mith Mac Screw, you ought to name thome fixed period for putting my couthin to the tetht, after thuth a gallant offer on hith part.”

“ Yes, you really ought,” chorussed the young ladies.

“ He, he, he !” giggled Miss Mac Screw, abstractedly helping herself to some more beef; “ well, next midsummer then, next midsummer—fine weather you know, fine weather, and the church will be fuller.”

“ Very true, only it’s a long time to wait—for many a slip between the cup and the lip; but we’ll make sure of one, at all events,” said he, pouring out two glasses of wine, and presenting one to Miss Mac Screw, while he took the other himself. “ Here’s success to our wishes, which ye’ll allow is fair, Miss Mac Screw, for though augh don’t know what your wishes may be, I know perfectly what my own are.”

At this juncture Mr. Joseph Tymmons entered, having just returned from a wedding five miles off, and gave a most glowing description of the bride’s beauty and bonnet, and of the bridegroom’s waistcoat and Waterloo blue cravat.

"Our wedding shall beat all the weddings that have been for the last century," whispered Peter, drawing his chair so close to Miss Mac Screw's, that he nearly found himself in her lap.

"Get away—get away," said she, backing her chair, and beating him away with her hand as one does a wasp—"get away—

"She partly is to blame who has been tried;
He comes too near, who comes to be denied,

you know."

"Yes, yes, augh know that's not worth coming for; but augh hop to come for something better next midsummer."

"Where ith Rush, Joseph?" inquired Mrs. Tymmons.

"Oh!" said Joseph, "in the clouds as usual. He went to see the industrious fleas yesterday, and has been writing an ode on them ever since."

"Ith quite shocking," moaned Mrs. Tymmons, "he studies so hard, he'll kill himself."

"No doubt, he'll go out like a rushlight some of these days," said Peter, with one of his stentorian laughs.

"Oh, you've no thoul for poetry," said Mrs. Tymmons; "but really some of hith things are quite ath good ath Lord Byron's!"

“ Very likely,” replied Hoskins with great gravity; “ while at the same time it must be a great source of satisfaction to you, Sarah, to think that he’ll never write anything as bad as Don Juan, Heaven and Earth, and the Vision of Judgment.”

“ It ith, indeed,” said Mrs. Tymmons, turning up her eyes with an exulting look of maternal pride and gratulation.

Here a short pause ensued in the conversation, while Alonso was summoned to take away the things. Till four o’clock nothing of any importance occurred, except Master Grimstone’s stealing a lump of damson cheese with his fingers, as it was exiting with Alonso, and afterwards surreptitiously wiping the aforesaid fingers in the back of Miss Mac Screw’s dress, which varied without improving it; but at four o’clock a deep and solemn sound was heard—it was Alonso outside the drawing-room door, giving three distinct thumps with the kitchen poker against the lid of a copper fish-kettle. This was an invention of the gifted Seraphina, who knew that at Blichingly Park, Campfield, and, in short, all the great houses she had ever heard of, a gong announced to the assembled guests when it was time to dress for dinner, and this was the best imitation of it she could de-

wise. As Miss Mac Screw invariably transferred the black holyoaks from the Leghorn bonnet to the pocket handkerchief toque for dinner, she ascended with the young ladies for the purpose of doing so, which left Mrs. Tymmons an opportunity of making known her husband's wishes to Mr. Hoskins, and extorting from him (in the plenitude of his delight at having so far succeeded with Miss Mac Screw,) a promise to comply with them.

The young ladies and their guest had scarcely re-descended to the drawing-room, and been joined by Mr. Tymmons, (who entered in high good humour, having succeeded in coaxing his wife into having a fire in the drawing-room,) when that universal genius and ubiquitous individual, Alonso, announced dinner, which he had no sooner done than a great deal of sprightly badinage ensued between Messrs. Tymmons and Hoskins, as to which of them should have the honour of taking Miss Mac Screw in to dinner, Mr. T. wittily observing, that it was more *lawful* (!) for him to do so, and Mr. H. replying, with equal wit, that it was more *orthodox* for him to do so, adding another spice of pleasantry, in the further assertion that he was a young man on his preferment: this of course decided the point. As every one must have some Tymmonses amongst their

acquaintance, and must have dined with them at election or other times, it is perhaps needless to describe the fuss that took place respecting seats upon their entering the dining-room, and the jokes which warmed the guests, but cooled the dinner, about "the gentlemen dividing the ladies," while Mr. Hoskins assured his cousins, with a wink, that they ought to hold up their heads, for he was sure they would not always have to sit next their brothers, and though certain events might give him more to do, yet for all that he sincerely wished it. Here followed a great deal of blushing, and twisting of ringlets, and "La, what do you mean?" from the young ladies.

At length they were actually seated, but not without poor Miss Mac Screw having been twice made to change her seat *nolens volens*, from the assurance, first, that she was too hot at that side, and then that she was too cold at the other, she vehemently but vainly denying both charges. Mrs. Tymmons, like Mrs. Primrose, always "carved all the meat for all the company," and spent every moment that she was not eating, in praising everything on the table, and assuring every one that it was the best in the world, which she did by the elegant exclamation of "O my! did you ever taste the like of that?" and

those not in the habit of dining there, could with truth answer Never!

“On hospitable thoughts intent,” she not only helped everything but deluged everything she helped with melted butter, to the no small annoyance of Miss Seraphina, who knew that all such condiments ought to be handed round; but, alas! as Alonso was not Briareus, she dared not even hint at this ambulating circular reform. Another thing too that greatly disgusted her, (as well it might,) was the sulphureous-looking straw mats that Mrs. Tymmons persisted in under the dishes. Miss Seraphina had, on more than one occasion, expressed her opinion of them by saying, it really looked as if they had once been straw-bonnet makers, and so had used up all their spare straw when they left off business; but even this did not do, and the mats stood their ground. Everything at the table was an imitation of something; each dish might have been labelled, *Aut navis aut galerus*,—the mutton was roasted to imitate venison, the soup was mock turtle, potato loaves played the part of Risoles without anything in them, and a peahen took refuge in celerly-sauce, and passed itself off for a turkey. It was not till dinner was half over, and the “gentlemen had asked the ladies” over and over

again to take wine, and Mr. Tymmons had praised his "Burgundy port," quite as much as his wife had lauded the dinner and the cookery, that Mr. Rush Tymmons made his *entrée*, his throat bare, and tempting assassination—his eyes "in a fine frenzy rolling," and apparently totally unconscious of the presence of any one. Miss Seraphina made room for him beside herself, which she was in duty bound to do, for she it was who was the cause of his being so late, for she was always telling him that the genius of every aristocratic family (when there was one) invariably either kept every one waiting dinner an hour, or else walked in when it was half over. Now it so happened that this day, of all days in the year, poor Mr. Rush was most unpoetically hungry; but sooner than violate the aristocratic standard of genius, he had stood for a full quarter of an hour outside the dining-room door, quadrupling his appetite by the *friande* steams of the forbidden feast.

"Why, Rush," said his sire, "always last?"

"At all events I hope not least, sir," said Mr. Rush, modestly.

"No, no, that ye can never be, as long as ye are six feet high, and all yer brothers so much shorter," said Hoskins, with a laugh and a

wink that were anything but complimentary to Mr. Rush's greatness, and for which that gentleman planned lampoons on him for the rest of dinner.

“As everything is cold by this time,” said Mr. Tymmons, senior, you had better try some of my souse,” pointing to the seductive *plat* on the dumb-waiter beside him. Mr. Rush looked wild boars at his progenitor, for insulting his delicacy by such a proposition, and glancing at a chicken, “motioned” to Alonso to bring him some, which when he had discussed, he gallantly drank toast and water with all his sisters, for he never touched wine. When the cloth was removed, and very small divers-coloured worsted doyleys placed before every one, with *one* wine-glass upon each, and Alonso had knocked down the last trayful of things, Mr. Hoskins became so alarmingly demonstrative to Miss Mac Screw, that Mrs. Tymmons was fain to do something to turn the current of his thoughts, and seeing Mr. Rush, with his eyes fixed upon the ceiling, as if watching the arrival of a new cargo of ideas, which, no doubt, come straight from heaven through the roof of the house, as people always look for them in that direction, she ventured to request that they

might be favoured with a sight of his ode upon the fleas.

“ Now do, my dear Rush,” urged his fond mother, “ for I’m thure ith beautiful, like everything you write.”

Mr. Rush blushed and stammered, and declared it was not yet finished.

“ Well, but let uth thee as much of it ath ith done,” entreated his mother.

“ Why, certainly, if you wish it,” said the obedient son, glancing round the table for further suffrages.

“ Do, Rush,” nodded his father, who again began to feel somniferously inclined, and who knew his son’s effusions were infallible narcotics.

“ Well,” said Rush, drawing the precious *morceau* from his waistcoat pocket, where it had lain like a love-letter in a post-office, ‘ to be kept till called for,’—“ remember it’s not *finished*, and it’s an irregularode,”—and irregular enough it certainly was,—“ and in order to make you understand it, I should tell you that one flea enacts Napoleon, another the Duke of Wellington, two more O’Connell and Lord Alvanley fighting a duel, a whole band imitate Strauss’s, while two young fleas are flirting in a drawing-

room, and the mamma flea is reading a newspaper, and does not see them. After this clear and lucid explanation, Mr. Rush smoothed the crumpled ode, and read as follows, his mother exclaiming, by way of prelude, "How very interething!"

ODE TO THE INDUSTRIOUS FLEAS!

Silent! subtle! hopping flea!
 Napoleon's self may be in thee;
 For still thou dost present to me
 A marvel and a mystery!
 But Wellington thou can'st not be,
 Since 'tis well known *he* ne'er did *flee*,
 Then jump and bite,
 And take thy flight,
 Like Joseph, when from Zulica he
 Did take his garments up and flee,
 While sages say and shake their head,
 " 'Twas Fleance did it, for 'twas Fleance fled."
 If blame you'd shun,
 Ne'er cut and run.
 But what is this? Oh fire and fuel!
 Next see O'Connell in a duel,—
 Nay surely, sir, the mighty Dan
 May kill but never flee his man.
 O keep, St. Kevin,
 His vow in heaven!
 But list! Flea fiddlers fill the house,
 With sounds not quite so good as Strauss';
 A damsel's in a ball-room flirting,
 Her mother's chap'ronage deserting;
 A flea in ear,
 She'll get, I fear!

“ That’s all I’ve done yet,” said Mr. Rush, looking round for admiration.

“ O, very clever—very clever indeed,” cried Mrs. Tymmons; “ in fact tho clever, that ith not every one that would underthand it.”

“ It’s a great deal cleverer than that,” said Hoskins, “ for augh don’t think there’s ony one who could understand it.”

“ Well, that ith a great deal for you to thay, Peter, and your praithe ith worth having about poetry(!) ith so hard to get,” said Mrs. Tymmons; “ and,” continued she, “ thuch a pretty compliment to the Duke of Wellington, I’m thure hith Grathe would be much flattered if he heard it, and he could not doubt ith sintherity, becauthe you are jutht to O’Connell, calling him the mighty Dan; but ith quite delightful, my dear Rush, to thee, a young man of your age, though really liberal in politics, giving merit on every *thide* where merit is due.”

“ D——n those fleas,” muttered Mr. Tymmons, starting from his slumbers; “ they are all over me, continued he, scratching the back of his hands.

“ There, Master Rush,” laughed Hoskins, “ *augh* advise you to make the most of *that*, for it’s as *grat* a compliment as the birds pecking at the grapes of Zeuxis.”

“ My dear—my dear !” exclaimed Mrs. Tymmons, screaming at her spouse, “ you’re going to sleep again—let uth have tea, and that will waken you.”

Tea was accordingly ordered, and all the cups and spoons rattled immediately under Mr. Tymmons’s ears, till they produced the desired effect, and he was wide awake, as every attorney ought to be. This enabled him to look over some bills, and while he was billing, Mr. Hoskins was cooing, which delightful amusement lasted till nine o’clock, at which hour Miss Mac Screw invariably left “ the festive scene,” for, as she justly observed, in houses where there was no supper, there was no use in staying any longer, as it was only leading Sally into the temptation of burning a rushlight, as no servant could be trusted to sit by the fire-light alone. Accordingly at nine o’clock Alonso appeared with lantern, clogs, and umbrella, and, flanked by the obsequious Peter, Miss Mac Screw was escorted back to Lavender-lane.

Scarcely had she left the house, before Miles Datchet, (who had taken leave of the Lees, Mrs. Stokes, and even Madge, during which last ceremony he had caught Freddy Flipps grinning over a hedge, and for which he had bestowed upon him a parting drubbing, with a

benedictory prophecy that he would yet ride a horse foaled by an acorn,)* called for Mrs. Tymmons's despatches to Lord de Clifford and his mother, as he (Datchet) was to start for the Continent early on the following morning, where it is high time we should follow him.

* Come to the gallows.

CHAPTER VI.

“ To-night in Venice we have placed our scene.”

GEORGE COLMAN'S *Epilogue to Clementina*.

“ There is a gloom in deep love as in deep water : there is a silence in it which suspends the foot ; and the folded arms and the dejected head are the images it reflects. No voice shakes its surface.”—WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

“ Now since we are alone, let us examine
The question which has long disturbed my mind
With doubt —

It is a hidden secret
Which I must fathom.”
SHELLEY.

“ In many ways does the full heart reveal
The presence of the love it would conceal.”
COLERIDGE.

THE day at length dawned, upon the evening of which Madame d'A.'s long-talked-of and, by some, long-wished-for masquerade was to take place. Fanny and Saville, as every one knew, (at least every one of their own party,) were to

figure as the knave and queen of hearts in the pack of living cards. The Dowager Lady de Clifford had announced it as her intention to go as Queen Elizabeth; consequently her eldest son immediately fixed upon Lord Leicester, while the amiable Herbert resolved upon personating the less-favoured but more intellectual Sir Walter Raleigh; especially as he knew his exemplary parent required a cloak upon all occasions, he determined to have one ready. Major Nonplus meant to astonish the natives by appearing in all the blue cloth and gold lace dignity of an English parish beadle. Mrs. Seymour had resolved upon going as Domenichino's Sibyl; for, to say nothing of a very beautiful face much resembling it, she had a very beautiful scarlet Delhi scarf, which was the very thing for the turban. Her sposo had not yet returned from Padua, so no one knew in what character he intended to go. Poor Monsieur Barbouiller, much against his will, had been teased into going; so, after some trouble, a little glue, a quantity of quills, and a large skin of black kid, he turned into a very respectable, but somewhat overgrown, porcupine. Mowbray had tried by every possible means to find out what Lady de Clifford intended to assume; for he knew that ever since his unlucky speech

that day at dinner in Milan, she had relinquished her original design of going as Johanna Queen of Naples. Even to the servants had he applied in vain—servants who, in general, act by their employers' secrets as the reeds did when Midas's barber whispered the mystery of his asses' ears to the earth—tell them to the whole world. The fact was, that Julia shrank from assuming any character, lest it might give him an opportunity of adopting a *pendant* to it, and so facilitate an *éclaircissement*, which, of all things on earth, she most dreaded; for she felt that it would bring about that crisis which must separate them for ever. That time, she felt, would come but too soon, and she might ward it off by keeping things as they were. Vain delusion! who ever yet succeeded, by shutting the eyes of their heart, in lulling it to sleep? She resolved, therefore, to wear a plain blue domino, and told Berryl to put very thick lace to the curtain of her mask, and not to let even her sister know what she intended to go in.

Mowbray, thus foiled at every point, determined to assume the dignity of mystery on his own account, and having secured the dress of a Carthusian friar, told his servant he should not want him at dressing-time, much to the disap-

pointment of Mr. Sanford, who felt greatly hurt at this unpardonable want of confidence on the part of his master, and could only console himself by telling all the couriers, ladies'-maids, and valets at dinner, that *his gentleman's* dress would be the most splendid and handsomest at the ball that night ; but though *he* had had a great deal of trouble in arranging it, no earthly power should get him to tell what it was, as Mr. Mowbray wished it kept a profound secret, and, let other people do what they would, he never told anything his master did not wish to have known—when he did not know it himself.

The morning was sultry in the extreme, and every one seemed unable to move off the sofa, except Major Nonplus, who was rehearsing his rôle for the evening in his beadle's dress, running about like an armadillo, fussing and fidgeting every one.

Herbert Grimstone had left the room in disgust, for he had given Monsieur Barbouiller his pamphlet “On the Present Administration” to read, begging that he would make any marginal remarks that struck him. Now, all that did strike him was the extreme arrogance and egotism of the whole affair ; consequently, the only remarks he had made were, wherever such sentences occurred as “‘This, in *my* opinion,

was the only measure to save the country, and this the ministers carried," or, "*My* opinion of the Irish appropriation clause was expressed under another administration, and that opinion is now borne out by the conduct of the present ministry, though *their* opinions were decidedly adverse to it when out of office, which proves what *I* have ever asserted—that is, that the Whigs are the only sound, true, liberal, and enlightened legislators, for they *know* that *change* is the quintessence of all reform; and as far as measures (not men) go, they are continually acting upon that knowledge." All the remarks, then, that Monsieur Barbouiller made, were to irradiate the personal pronoun in every such sentence with a glory round it, to the no small amusement of Fanny and Saville, who declared he would get up an opposition pamphlet, and present it to him that night at the ball; and retiring for the purpose of writing it, Fanny was left alone with Mowbray and her sister, who was embroidering the last letter of the motto on Lord Leicester's garter, and whom the former, in spite of herself, was making die with laughter at a *scena* she had got up of the supposed virgin demeanour of the dowager queen, and the amatory devotion of her two courtier sons. Fanny was in the midst

of an imaginary speech of the mimic queen to Lord Leicester about his *head* and *hort*, when Lord de Clifford himself entered, and hearing Mowbray's laugh, and seeing Fanny in the middle of the room, with her hands out like his illustrious mother, he said, folding his arms, putting his head back and drawing in, and biting his upper lip, as was his wont when he wanted to be ultra dignified, "As usual, Miss Neville, at your buffoonery, I suppose. If there is one thing more low and degrading than another, and more a proof of imbecility of mind, it is that turn for mimicry which you are eternally indulging in."

"I must say," said Fanny, bowing to this complimentary speech, "that *l'eau benite de la cour* of the Elizabethan age is not quite so sweet, my lord of Leicester, as that of our own."

"Never mind, Miss Neville," said Mowbray; "I have observed that persons who cannot themselves mimic, have no toleration for, but a great dread of, those who can; however, you have some good authorities with you: is it not Percival who says, 'Parody is a favourite flower both of ancient and modern literature; its ludicrous properties derive their wit from association, and never fail to produce admiration and

delight, when it unites taste in selection with felicity of application ; even licentious specimens of it move to laughter ; for we are always inclined to be diverted with mimicry, or ridiculous imitation, whether the original be an object of respect, or indifference, or even of contempt.' Recollect, too, that a polished Athenian audience heard, with bursts of mirthful applause, even the discourses of their favourite Socrates burlesqued upon the stage. These 'wise saws,' " concluded Mowbray, laughing, " may perhaps console you for more 'modern instances' of disapprobation."

" I'm not quite sure that they will," said Fanny, " for there was a great deal of truth in Hogarth's answer to the young lady who said she envied him his powers of caricaturing."

" What was that?" asked Mowbray.

" Why, that the sense of the ridiculous had destroyed for him the beautiful, for that in the face of an angel he could not help detecting something to caricature. It is for the same reason that one never can sympathise with an habitual sneerer, however affectingly and beautifully some of the thoughts may be expressed. I feel this in a peculiar degree with Voltaire. One cannot even be sure that he felt it when he wrote *Zaire, vous pleurez!* and this doubt

makes one almost check one's own tears as they rise."

"That is a very profound remark of yours," replied Mowbray, "for there is a depth in all truth, which nothing but sincerity can extract. Even dogs can detect real from affected sorrow or anger, and sympathise with the former, as much as they neglect and pay no attention to the latter."

"Really, Miss Fanny," said Major Nonplus, perpetrating a pirouette, while he flourished his beadle's staff over her head, "I should be quite unhappy if you were my daughter; for they say, so young, and yet so wise, never live long."

"Pardon me," said Mowbray, smiling, "not that I would for a moment set Cicero's authority against *yours*; but you know the proverb he quotes in his book *De Senectute*. I mean,

"Mature has senex, si diu senex esse velis."

"Oh! if you begin with your classics, I'm off," said the major, "for I never had any penchant for the ancients, male or female. Ha! ha! ha!—but don't tell Mrs. N. this when you see her," added he, with his finger at the side of his nose, as he made his exit.

"Isn't that d——d garter finished yet?" said Lord de Clifford gruffly, as he folded a

note he had been writing during the foregoing conversation; "Mademoiselle Dantoville would have done it in half the time."

"It is a pity you did not give it to her to do, then," said Fanny indignantly, "as her sister left the room, with tears coursing each other down her cheeks as she placed the piece of embroidery upon the table, which her lord and master took up, and departed through another door.

"What superior beings your sex are—are they not, Mr. Mowbray?" asked Fanny ironically, as the door closed on her brutal brother-in-law.

"They are superior brutes, when they set about it, certainly," said Mowbray, as he and Fanny went up stairs together to their respective rooms.

That night the lights flitted from room to room, and from corridor to corridor, in Il Leone Bianco—and

"Within the surface of the fleeting river,
The wrinkled image of the city lay
Immovably unquiet."

The last gondola had rowed away with every one but Lord and Lady de Clifford; and Mowbray, who, knowing that the latter must pass through the drawing-room on her way down

stairs, as her bedroom was within it, concealed himself behind a curtain, in the deep recess of one of the windows, that he might ascertain what her dress was. There did not appear to be a soul left in the hotel; for the master and mistress of it, with all the servants, had been invited by Madame de A.'s domestics to go and see the ball. Lord de Clifford had confided "the Virgin Queen" to the gallantry of Sir Walter Raleigh, while he lingered behind to console his dear Amy, or rather his *bien aimée*, in the school-room, before he joined the brilliant pageant. Poor Julia was still sitting before her toilet, with a heavy heart, and her mask on, listening for the last footsteps to recede, that she might not encounter Mowbray, when the door was unceremoniously opened, and her husband entered, glittering and sparkling in the magnificent dress of Lord Leicester.

"How kind of you," said Julia, springing forward, "to come and let me see you before you went! Your dress is really beautiful; and how well you have put on the garter," continued she, stooping down to look at it.

"D—n it!" cried he with an impatient stamp of the foot, "I can't stand here all night for you to look at me as if I was a puppet-show. I want those last books that came from Paris for

Mademoiselle Dantoville. I think, poor thing, as she is up there by herself, you might have thought of offering them to her, only you never do anything that you ought to do."

"They are over there," said Lady de Clifford, rather haughtily, pointing to an opposite chiffoniere, with one of her small, white, delicately beautiful hands.

"D——n you, madam," said her tyrant, "what do you mean by speaking to me in that tone?" and as he spoke, he inflicted a blow upon the extended hand, so violent and sudden, and the pain of which was so intense, that poor Julia uttered a faint shriek.

"That's right, madam, make a scene, do, and let all the world know how ill-used you are; why don't you ring the bell for your maid, to come and see what a suffering angel her mistress is? I tell you what it is, madam, if you don't wash your face and dry your tears, and go to that d——d ball directly as becomes *my* wife, without any further fuss, I'll find some means of bringing you to your senses."

So saying, he walked to the chiffoniere, took the books, and quitted the room through the passage door by which he had entered.

Suffering as she was both in body and mind, still the habit of obedience and fear was so

strong upon her, that poor Julia took off her mask, walked over to a basin, and plunged her face into cold water ; but, in trying to replace the mask, she found she was unable to raise her right hand ; the wrist was out of joint, and swollen to a painful degree. She would gladly have gone to bed, but then Berryl and all the servants were out ; there was no one to undress her, and with her hand in that helpless state it was impossible even to make an attempt at undressing herself : it glanced across her that Mademoiselle Dantoville was up stairs, but she recoiled from the idea of asking her to do anything for her, with a feeling of sickening disgust.

“ Yes,” said she, “ I must go to that horrid ball ; if I can but bear the pain, the loose sleeve of my domino will hide my hand, and I must only hold my mask with the other hand till I can find some one to tie it.” Having come to this decision, she opened the drawing-room door : it was a dark, lofty, spacious apartment, (like all the Venetian rooms,) at the moment partially and dimly lit by a pair of candles on the high antique mantelpiece, and one solitary Roman lamp on the table. The chains of the lamp, as well as the flame, were blowing about from the draught that came from the casement, and what

added to the gloom, was the solemn stillness—only broken in upon by the faint and phantom-like echoes of the plashing oars of every passing gondola.

Lady de Clifford had got half across the room, when Mowbray, anxious to be sure that it was her, leant forward in his ambush to try and see her face, before which, however, she held her mask. The move he had made caused a slight rustling against the curtain. Nervous and ill before, this mysterious noise, added to the sepulchral gloom of the room, completely subdued her already over-excited frame, and tottering towards a sofa, she sank fainting and exhausted upon it, the mask falling at the same time from her lifeless hand. Shall we confess it? This scene, which at any other time, or rather in the presence of any third person, would have driven Mowbray to distraction between grief and fear, now produced but one feeling, that of unmixed happiness. There lay before him, helpless and unconscious, all that he loved on earth; there might he pour out unchecked, unchided, all the deep-hoarded, pent up, burning love which had been preying upon his heart so long—there lay that worshipped and unapproachable being at his mercy, the slightest touch of whose hand had been more than he

had dared to aspire to. And what were the resolves of this man of honour — with most men falsely so called? “*Si Leonini pellis non satis est, assuenda vulpina.*”—is their invariable motto upon all occasions. Was it Mowbray’s? Let him answer for himself. He sprang from his concealment, he knelt beside that senseless form, he bent over those pale cold features as though their spirit had fled, and, by looking, he would have gazed his own into them: he approached the slightly parted and beautiful lips, but their silent eloquence prevailed.

“Yes, sweet soul,” said he, retreating, “that pure and angel spirit which ever hovers round and guards you, shall be obeyed. I will not rob you, ’twould be a paltry triumph to take that which you would never give. Good God!” exclaimed he, “well may she say all men are selfish—here am I actually feasting upon, revelling in her misery! I ought to get some water to revive her;” but here a fresh paroxysm of selfishness and self-delusion came over him, and he added, “it will be better to rub her hands.” And raising the loose sleeve of her domino, her swollen, drooping, and blackening right hand met his view. “Good heavens!” said he, “can that monster De Clifford have done this? I heard his hated voice speak-

ing angrily in the next room, and I thought—but then that was too dreadful—that I heard her scream. Julia! my Julia! yes, mine in spite of them all! only look at me, speak to me, tell how this happened!”—and as he tried to get the rings off her fingers which were now visibly swelling too, his kisses and tears, which deluged her hand, from the pain they occasioned, seemed to bring her back to a sort of half-consciousness.

“No! Berry!, no!” murmured she, putting her left arm round Mowbray’s neck, and leaning her head against his, “it was an accident, but bind up my wrist and get me to bed—I’m ill, very ill.” As she spoke, the arm which had encircled Mowbray fell lifelessly beside her, and her head sank back on the pillow. Mowbray now loosened the domino about her throat, and opened it to give her a little more air: in doing so, he perceived a very slight Venetian chain; he drew it out, and attached to it was the little purple enamel watch he had given young Julia. He touched the spring mechanically, the watch opened, and a white leaf dropped out: he raised it, thinking it might be a bit of paper that the child had placed there; but, on examining it, it proved to be the dried leaf of a water-lily,

folded, and in small rose-coloured letters were painted on it the day and hour he had plucked it at Como.

“ By heavens, she loves me !” cried he exultingly, as he kissed and replaced the silent tell-tale. He felt that upon this conviction he could live for years without even betraying it to her, much less encroaching on it, by asking or hoping more—nay, more he could not have borne ; he felt as if it would have been sacrilege to let any subsequent joy disperse or even blend with the intense, the unalloyed happiness of that moment ; for there are feelings on the mysterious altars of the heart, so subtle, so holy, so impalpably delicate, that the realities that rivet, destroy them like the fairy hues on some rare flowers : too beautiful to last, they perish at the touch. At that moment, had Julia been conscious of his presence, Mowbray would not have asked her if she loved him ; even her voice, so loved—so soft—which for him had a haunting charm,

“ Like the voiceless words
Of the flowers and the birds,”

would have dispelled the Elysium that then filled his heart, for he felt that the whole book

of fate did not contain such another leaf for him as that of the faded lily he had just found. A few moments more he gave to letting his new-found happiness take root in his heart ; and then, seeing no chance of recovering Julia without medical assistance, he gently placed some chairs by the side of the sofa, to prevent her falling in case she revived before his return, and locked her bedroom door from without, first writing upon a slip of paper, " Berryl, Lady de Clifford is very ill, return immediately." Then, to prevent the possibility of any intruder, he locked the drawing-room door, and, hurrying down the stairs, went out at the back of the house, and ran along the narrow streets, till he reached the *Chiesa del Redentore*, a few doors from which he found a surgeon, who seeing Mowbray's pale, agitated face, and at first from his dress mistaking him for a capuchin, exclaimed, "Cosa stupenda ! avrà avuto forse qualche terrore, mio padre ?"

Mowbray explained to him as briefly as possible that an English lady at Il Leone Bianco had been suddenly taken ill through meeting with an accident, and putting her wrist out of joint, and urged him to make all possible speed, almost dragging the poor doctor along as he spoke. In his eagerness his hood had

fallen off, and discovered his crisp, curling, dark hair, Achilles-like head, and handsome face, as unlike a monk's as need be, to say nothing of the perfections of his mouth and teeth, which differed widely from any member's of that worthy fraternity. At sight of such a handsome cavaliero, a light seemed to break upon the doctor, whom Mowbray would hardly give time to collect his bandages and necessary implements, exclaiming every moment, "Andiamo, partiamo! Signor Dottore;" whereupon the doctor whistled out, with a Figaro nod of the head, "Chi ha amor nel petto ha le sprone ne i fianchi."

At length the doctor's cloak was on, and they had just gained the threshold of the door, when a stout brown damsel, with a voice like a peacock, came screaming after the poor Esculapius, to tell him that he would lose his supper, which was quite ready; but the only notice he took of this, was the rather ungracious one of "Tace, tace, Biondetta, tre donne e un occa fan un mercato." Embarking at the nearest canal, Mowbray told the gondoliers to row with all speed to the Palazzo Barberigo, (which Madame de A. had hired,) in order that he might get the note conveyed to Berryl, and then proceeded as quickly as possible to Il Leone

Bianco. On arriving he hurried up stairs before the doctor, so as to unlock the drawing-room-door: the noise he made in doing so roused Lady de Clifford, who moved slightly.

“Come in, doctor,” said Mowbray. “What do you think had better be done? She appears to have been insensible ever since I went for you, and all her family being at this ball of Madame de A’s., I am doubly anxious about this poor lady.”

“Sicuro,” said the doctor, with a half smile, as he proceeded to feel Lady de Clifford’s pulse; and, then shaking his head, asked for some eau de Cologne and other restoratives. Mowbray flew to his dressing-room for them, and when he returned found that Julia began to evince symptoms of returning animation. Her brow was slightly contracted, as if from the pain occasioned her by pressing her wrist; a faint murmur escaped her lips. Mowbray bent down to listen to what she was trying to say, and distinctly heard the words, “Dear Mowbray!” Totally forgetting that the poor doctor did not understand one word of English, and that if he had, he would not have known who Mowbray was, he turned to him and said—“She is asking for her maid; and—and—she is not come yet.”

“ Well, well,” replied the doctor, “ you take her left hand and rub the palm of it, while I bandage up the other.”

Mowbray almost wished that she would not revive, that his occupation might continue. Soon, however, she opened her eyes, and looked vacantly at him and then at the doctor; at length she started wildly up, and looking round, put her hand to her head, and said, “ Where am I?”

“ Here—at home—in the drawing-room,” said Mowbray gently. “ Dear Lady de Clifford, you have been very ill,” continued he, his voice trembling with emotion; “ you have met with some terrible accident; and—and—sprained your wrist, I believe—so I went for a doctor to look at it—and this is he.”

“ *You* went for a doctor!” said Julia, straining back her hair, and looking wildly at Mowbray, “ and who—when—I mean where is my child—where is my sister—where are they all? and why am I here with you alone? In mercy tell me what has happened;” and she flung herself frantically on her knees before him.

“ O God! this is too much!” said Mowbray, lifting her on the sofa; “ do be calm, dearest Lady de Clifford, and I will tell you

everything. They are at the ball—Madame de A.'s ball. We were all going. You hurt your wrist in some way or other, and fainted, I suppose, from the pain. Happening to pass through the room at the time, I found you in a state of insensibility, and went for this man; that is all, upon my honour; but take care of your hand—you see it has been bandaged."

O yes! I remember," said she, with a slight shudder, looking at her hand, "you are ver—very good, Mr. Mowbray. I am shocked to have given you so much trouble; but pra—pray don't let me detain you from the ball."

"Till your maid (whom I have sent for) comes, you certainly must detain me," replied he, coldly, "and then I will rid you of my presence."

"Rid me!" repeated Julia, raising her eyes, filled with tears, to his—"do forgive me, and don't think me ungrateful."

"Not unless angels are so," said Mowbray; and then turning quickly round to the doctor, who was steeping lint in eau de Cologne at the table, asked him what he thought the signora had best take. Whereupon that worthy man advanced with a scientific shrug, and again feeling Lady de Clifford's pulse, put the usual

Italian medical query, whether about a broken neck or a scratched finger—

“Avrebbe 'ella forse fatto una caduta, signora?”

Lady de Clifford answered, “No—that she had had no fall.”

At which the doctor again shrugged his shoulders, and raised his eyebrows, and saying he would send her some leeches for her hand, and a composing draught for herself, turned to Mowbray to ask the lady's name to whom they were to be sent; and the latter having written it on a piece of paper, the doctor took leave, promising to call early in the morning. The door closed, and Julia and Mowbray were again alone. A few moments' perfect silence ensued, which Lady de Clifford was the first to break.

“I am sure,” said she, hesitatingly, “I have much to thank you for. Will you forgive all the trouble I have occasioned you? I—I—am quite well now; and pray don't let me detain you any longer—here—away—that is, from the ball, I mean,” added she, extending her hand to Mowbray, and making an effort to rise as she spoke.

“Julia!” cried he, seizing her proffered hand, and kneeling passionately before her, “all dis-

guise is useless—the veil is rent—the idol has revealed its own mysteries—the dense masses of doubt—of danger—ay, and of duty, that concealed them, have crumbled around us, and the immutable truth has flooded my soul with a divine light, that neither time nor eternity can shadow nor extinguish.

“ Julia, *you love me!* Nay, tremble not, nor turn from me. Yes, *you love me!*—dear, dear words! It is your heart, and not your lips, which have pronounced them. That heart, which, in spite of yourself, is mine, will not, cannot conceal its minutest pulsation from me; and surely mine has not been in your possession so long, without convincing you that no other ever yet beat with the same devotion, the same truth, the same purity of worship, towards any human being. I know all that you would say, and that others would suspect; for I know the fatal, the insurmountable barrier that exists between us; but is it because one shrine is richer than any other, that we cannot kneel at it without being suspected of sacrilege? Were you like other women, I might love you with the ordinary love of men—if that more than brute selfishness, which destroys while it degrades, deserves that sacred name; but the

moment I respected you less, should I love you less, think you, then?"

"O God!" cried Julia, struggling to release her hand, "have mercy on me. If you indeed love me, release me. You know I must not, ought not, to listen to such language from any human being. I know not what accident may have revealed to you my guilty, my unpardonable weakness! Despise me. I fear you must; but pity while you despise."

"Julia!" said Mowbray, solemnly, releasing her hand, "why degrade yourself by talking of guilt! Do you think that the great God is a just or an unjust Being? Has he made any grammatical distinctions in the Decalogue? Has he said to man, thou shalt commit such and such sins, and to woman, thou shalt not? And if man, who is in the daily habit of violating the most sacred and explicit of God's commandments, still hopes for mercy, shall woman be put beyond the pale of redemption, for a mere feeling which is involuntary?"

"Certainly not," said Julia, "I firmly believe, that however custom, and the laws they themselves make, may absolve men for the violation of God's commandments in this world, they will have to give a strict and fearful

account in the next. Yet sin in others is no excuse for sin in ourselves. Did we merely owe duty towards man, there would be nothing sacred or binding in our obligations. And their great enormities might palliate, while they provoked, lesser ones in us; but upon the first and faintest dawning of every sin, above all those ‘ ’gainst which the Almighty has set his canon,’ let us ask our hearts, with the pure and obedient Hebrew captive, ‘ Can I do this, and commit this great sin against God?’ for, depend upon it, this self-interrogation is our only safeguard, as it can be our only standard of right and wrong.”

“ And think you,” replied Mowbray, mournfully, “ that I would wish or ask you to sin against that God in whom my whole trust for you is placed? Ah, Julia! you little know the nature and depth of what I feel for you, or you would know that my almost every thought of you is a prayer; for angels themselves are not purer than the feelings you inspire. Your sorrows alone would make you sacred in my eyes. Had you been happy, I might have been wretch enough to have attempted the destruction of that happiness; but as it is, the foul fiend himself would shrink from injuring you. Your friend none can blame nor prevent my

being. I know how suspicious the title sounds, when it is adopted by a lover; but there is a friendship which is love; in everything but passionate vows, caprice, and inconstancy; and such you shall find mine for you, Julia. This night has been the crisis of my—of our fate; and it has been dark and starless till now. When the moon is rising gloriously, see how it floods that wide waste of waters, brightening even the dark and deathlike burdens it bears upon its bosom. And now its rays fall upon the wings of the diamond dove in your hair, and they actually seem to flutter and hover over you. Be this unto us as an omen and a promise of brighter, happier hours.”

And again Mowbray knelt before her; and as he covered her hand (which she no longer withheld) with kisses, their tears fell hot and fast, and mingled as they fell.

“But that poor hand,” said he, “tell me, was it, could it have been that monster De Clifford who struck you?”

Julia turned away her head, and made no answer.

“Ah! I see how it is,” said he, “*chi tace confessa*. Good heavens! what are some men made of!”

“Do,” said Julia, in order to change the

subject, "go to Madame de A.'s. Indeed I am much, much better now; and thank you a thousand times for the care you have taken of me. Do, dear friend, go."

"Bless you for those words," cried Mowbray, "and never, never shall you find me unworthy of so enviable a title; but indeed I will not, cannot leave you till your maid comes; then I will go—for, for your sake I ought to be seen at that horrid ball. You need not, however, dread my remaining, for my heart is too full to say more to-night; but, O Julia! to-morrow I will try and convince you that all men are not wholly and solely actuated by motives of selfishness." As he finished speaking, he walked over to the table and poured out a glass of water; while he was drinking it, a knock came to the door.

"Come in," said Lady de Clifford, and Berryl entered in the greatest possible state of trepidation.

"Good *evens*, my Lady, what *as appened*?" exclaimed she, "for I left you quite well and ready dressed, and I got this slip of paper, saying your ladyship was took suddenly *hill*; and I should have been here sooner, but Madam *Hangelique*, the Countess's maid, tried to persuade me, *hin* her broken *Henglish*, that

it was only a masquerading hoax of the Count's *valley* that gave me the paper; but though I saw plenty of blue dominos, they had none of them your air, my lady, so I come away—for all they could say to me. And I hope your ladyship hain't been very *hill*."

"No, only an accident, Berryl. I put my wrist out of joint and fainted from the pain, and Mr. Mowbray, who happened to pass through the room, saw me, and was good enough to go for a doctor, who has bandaged it up, and I dare say it will soon be well."

Berryl, who now for the first time perceived Mowbray, dropped him a low curtsy, with an "I beg your pardon, sir, I didn't *hobserve* you before. Was her ladyship long in the faint-in fit?"

"Not very long," replied he, "and Doctor Pozzo is to send some leeches for her hand, and a composing draught to be taken on going to bed.

"Let me look at your hand, my lady," said Berryl; and then shaking her head, she muttered, "*haccident* indeed! No, but more of that wretch's *andy* work."

"I'm sure," said Lady de Clifford, turning to Mowbray, and anxious to prevent Berryl saying anything further, "I have a thousand

apologies to make for detaining you so long from the ball."

"Not at all," said he, in a tone of commonplace gallantry; "I'm too happy if I have been of the slightest use;" and then added in a still more careless tone, turning to Berryl, "I don't suppose I have lost much of the spectacle—have I?"

"No, sir, not much, only the game with the living cards, which was very beautiful and *curus*, the way they were *hall* shuffled, and cut, and dealt three times over, and each time *Mussue* de Rivoli, who is the knave of spades, you know, sir, contrived always to get next Miss Neville, and then there was great laughing, and Major Nonplus would come up and insist upon fair play, and their being dealt over again."

"And how do Queen Elizabeth and her court get on?" asked Mowbray smiling.

"O *p'raps* it's very wrong of me to say, sir, and a servant may have no business to make remarks, but I should say it was quite *ridiclus—hevery* one was laughing, especially when the French gentleman that went as the Hedge-hog caught the old lady's ruff in one of his quills; and then Sir Something Sally, that's Mr. Herbert, you know, sir,

drew his sword, but the hedgehog poking his quills in his eyes, he was glad to make his escape, and then how the people did laugh, to be sure ! but some of the dresses are most *helegant* and splendid, certainly."

"Well, you really make me long to see it all," said Mowbray, smiling; and then turning to Julia, and holding out his hand, added, "and as I think I must rather be in your way than otherwise, I'll now wish you good-night, my dear Lady de Clifford, sincerely hoping that you may feel no bad effects from your accident by to-morrow; and I'm sure I can't leave you in better or more careful hands than Mrs. Berryl's."

"That's what I call a real gentleman," said the latter, as Mowbray closed the door after him; "but how Mr. Sanford could go and tell every one that his dress was the most splendid thing that ever was seen, unless he wanted to mystify us all, I'm sure I cannot conceive; but it is no great matter, for such a *andsome* man looks well in anything, while all the velvet and jewels in the world won't make some people look even passable."

Leaving Julia to the care of Berryl, we will follow Mowbray. When he got into his gondola to go to the Palazzo Barberigo, the sea

was no longer dark, but like a sheet of diamond water from the light of the bright moon above it, and everything looked and sounded happier than when he had floated over it an hour or two before; and as he landed at the terrace of the Palazzo, a boat passed, in which a very sweet voice, that seemed to rise from the waters, was singing the barcarola "*Or che in Cielo*," from the Marino Faliero. This had scarcely passed, before another bark glided by, with an apparently happier party, who were singing most exquisitely that beautiful terzetto from Otello, "*Ti parli l'amore*." Mowbray lingered on the steps, and joined in it, till he felt a hand upon his shoulder, and heard a voice exclaim, (which he instantly recognised as Saville's,) "No doubt, holy father, '*ti parli l'amore*' is your form of absolution when confessing a pretty novice; but now tell me, in plain English, what makes you so late?"

"I have been here some time," stammered Mowbray.

"Then I hope you saw how well we played our cards?"

"Yes—no—that is, it was so hot, I did not go into the house—yet, in fact, just as I was coming away, poor Lady de Clifford was taken very ill, and nobody being left in the house, I

had to go for a doctor, which detained me ; in short, (but don't tell her sister, at least to-night, for it would only make her unhappy, and do no good,) her husband gave her a blow on her hand that put her wrist out of joint, and she fainted from the pain."

"Brute !" exclaimed Saville ; "how I long to kick that man ! and I shall have to do it at last."

"Pray resign in my favour," said Mowbray, "whenever the opportunity occurs ; but how is this—I left you the knave of hearts, and now I find you an English sailor?"

"A distinction without a difference, perhaps you think," said Saville ; "but my black-eyed Susan is waiting for me, and I have a squib to give that illustrious member of the British senate, Mr. Herbert Grimstone ; so *addio, mio caro !*" saying which, he darted off, leaving Mowbray to choose what path he liked.

As he advanced into the garden, he found it brilliantly illuminated, with groups of gorgeously dressed people representing different scenes, eras, and epochs in Italian history ; and one end of the garden, in especial, presented a scene of dazzling splendour, being fitted up as the Piazza di San Marco, representing that magnificent festival given on the defeat of the

rebels, and the end of the Candian war, the splendour of which Petrarch complained of being unable to find an adequate Latin name for. There sat, in the mimic marble gallery over the porch, the Doge, with his princely train, sheltered by golden canopies; Petrarch on his right alone, and the four-and-twenty noble Venetian youths headed by a Ferrarese; then came the group of English barons, (some of the blood-royal, as Petrarch described them,) and the flashing of bright eyes, and crimsoning of soft cheeks, amid the waving of white plumes and the glittering of costly jewels;—altogether the scene was one of fairy-like enchantment, but too gay and buoyant to accord with the dreamy but melancholy happiness of Mowbray's mind that night; so he lingered but a moment, and walked silently on till he reached the house; he entered the vestibule just as Saville (whom he knew by his dress, in spite of a very good and characteristic mask) was presenting a scroll of paper to Sir Walter Raleigh, whom he accosted after the following manner:—

“You be a parliament-man now: well, nobody 'ill ever be the better for that; howsomdever, I wish as how you'd just present this here petition the next time parliament's *re-*rogued, for I know it's *prorogued* at present.

Now mind, my hearty, if you don't, it's all up with you at your next *'lection*—I tell ee so, and I'm a Triverton man; and I ha'n't been aboard an English man-o'war so long without knowing something about unfurling *canvass*, d'ye see? *Whoy*, you're sadly gone down in the world as you've got on in it; for when she was on her reign (pointing to his mother, who was leaning on his arm) you did some good, for you brought *baccy* into England: so put that into your pipe and smoke it, as Muster Hume says in his History of England."

"My dear," said the Dowager Lady de Clifford to her son, moving onward, "this is vaustly disagreeable to be beset by such vulgar people; throw away that paper that horrid man gave you."

"O, my dear mamma, all these sort of things are the life of a masquerade, and we may find some fun in this when we get home."

"Please your most gracious Majesty," said Major Nonplus, dragging *ex officio* an unfortunate youth by the collar—"here is a vagrant that has been lately shooting over your Majesty's royal demesne of Blichingly, in ——shire, come to crave your highness's pardon."

"Who is it?" whispered her Majesty to Sir Walter Raleigh, pointing to a thread papery-

looking neither man nor boy, dressed as Master Slender."

"O, Lord Charles Dinely, Lord Shuffleton's youngest son, who has just left Harrow, and is here with his tutor; and if you remember, my dear mamma, you were kind enough to say that I might ask him to shoot at Blichingly, whenever he was in the neighbourhood."

"O, ah! true, my dear, I'm vaustly glad he's here, for I'll ask him about my plantation near the labyrinth, as he has been so recently at Blichingly." So saying, she graciously turned to the lordling, who had a vast deal of unlicked cubbism about him, and said—

"I hope your lordship had good sport at Blichingly."

"Pretty fair; but all the keepers confoundedly stupid."

"Did your lordship" (his lordship was just seventeen)—"did your lordship see the new plantation?"

"Yes."

"Were the alders and birch trees coming on?"

"'Pon my honour, I don't know, for I'm no arborologist; only know, that when I left Harrow, *birch was deucedly backward*."

At the conclusion of this brilliant sally, Lord

Charles turned upon his heel with a horse-laugh, and left the poor dowager lamenting her unusual waste of civility.

Weary of all around him, Mowbray left the hall and wandered up stairs, till he came to the room in which Titian died ; it was deserted, save by his pictures of the Magdalene and the Venetian senator, and it might be haunted by the spirit of him that painted them. Mowbray flung himself upon a couch, and gazing upon the deep and mournful beauty of the face before him, which looked as if to it had also been said, “ Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much,” a train of sweet and bitter thoughts came over him, and he wept like a child ; he put his hand into his bosom for a handkerchief ; the one he drew out seemed as if it had been stolen from the wardrobe of Titania, so fine was its texture, and so delicately beautiful the point lace with which it was trimmed : —it was Lady de Clifford’s he had taken by mistake, and it was still wet with her tears. “ ‘This at least,” said he, “ shall never leave me, all my thoughts be in it,

‘ Unless it be to think that she is by,
And feed upon the shadow of perfection.’ ”

Mowbray had scarcely replaced the hand-

kerchief before Major Nonplus, staff in hand, stumped into the room.

“God bless me, Mowbray, is that you? had no idea you were here alone, or should have come to you before; hope you’re not offended though—it’s the way at these masks, you know—every one for themselves. Capital fun we’ve had to be sure, and through the whole of it, I assure you, I’ve kept English order and regularity, by keeping an eye upon them all; and as I told the young people, they may flirt as much as they like (for that’s natural) in the rooms where there are plenty of lights and people, but no tête-à-têtes and dark walks, and that sort of thing. Well, I must say,” continued he, mopping his face with a silk pocket handkerchief, which in colours and dimensions might have been mistaken for the union jack, “I must say, tho’ I say it who should not say it, that I’m always trying to do for everybody.”

“God knows you are,” groaned Mowbray; and thinking this quintessence of bore might be diluted and neutralised by the crowd, he accepted his invitation to go down stairs. After remaining another half hour, and sauntering through the rooms without a mask, that every one might see that he was there, he was pre-

paring to go as day was beginning to dawn, and all the people looking jaded, dusty, and ugly, between the invidious discoveries of the two lights, which were unnaturally turning against their own—the real light making all that was real look bad, and the artificial light making all that was artificial look worse. Just as Mowbray was leaving the room, he was riveted by Queen Elizabeth's dulcet accents, accosting Lord Charles Dinely as follows:—

“When your lordship returns to England, I hope you will shoot at Blichingly whenever you please, for the greatest pleasure we landed proprietors have is supplying our friends with game.”

“O, I'm sure they can never want it while you're in the country,” replied Lord Charles, with a clodpole bow and grin, which luckily her ladyship took for a compliment.

“Ah! Mowbray, how do?” said he, extending one finger, “you'll soon be a marquis, my boy, for when I left, your uncle old Lord Cheveley was expected to kick every minute; when it happens, don't forget I've four sisters, one uglier than another, and you may have your choice of them; or if you prefer it, two cousins also, rather plain about the head. Where are

you staying? Red Lion, eh? Silver Lion—what do they call it?”

“Yes,” said Mowbray, “good-night, or rather morning, for it,

. “like the spirit of a youth
That means to be of note, begins by times.”

On getting into his gondola, the fresh sea breezes that played upon his cheek made him less inclined for sleep than ever. Upon reaching the hotel, he saw Berryl, and having ascertained that Julia had at length fallen asleep, not being able to follow her example, he sat down and wrote her the following letter.

CHAPTER VII.

. " I love thee, and I feel
That on the fountain of my heart a seal
Is set to keep its waters pure and bright
For thee ——"

P. B. SHELLEY.

" There is a comfort in the strength of love ;
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
Would upset the brain, or break the heart."

WORDSWORTH.

" Oh ! none but gods have power their love to hide."

MARLOWE.

" THE dreadful struggles which have taken place, dearest, between reason and my love for you, have so agitated and exhausted me, that were I to die for it to-morrow, I must write to you to-day. O Julia ! what is there in your very name that I cannot even write it without my cheek kindling, and my heart glowing as if a ' scintilla dell' immortal fuoco' had, for the

first time fallen upon it, and filled it with the heaven from whence it came. Bear with me, then, while I, for the first and last time, link my soul, my fate, my name, with yours. Remember that your breath still lingers on my cheek your touch still thrills in mine — our tears are not yet dried, and the bloom is still fresh upon every feeling. These are bad materials for a stoic ; but down itself is capable of petrification. It has been said that

‘ Love’s heroism is equal to all acts,
But seldom to forbearance.’

“ He knew not love who said so, for love is not love that is not equal to all things for the sake of what it loves ; and if forbearance be its test, it will know nought else. Julia, my life began when I knew you, therefore it would be needless to go back to a prior stage of my existence, were it not to give you some guarantee for the stability of my promises. The sort of mother a man has had, may, generally speaking, be pretty correctly known by the estimate he entertains of her sex. There are two kinds of mothers, who invariably engender in their sons a respect and consideration for women ;—the one is the mother of superior intellect, properly evinced in the education of her children,

and is even more solicitous in weeding than planting their dispositions ;—the other is one who, without many intellectual advantages, possesses that sort of moral pre-eminence and right-mindedness, which, proved by every act of her life, (for such persons seldom deal in aphorisms and fine sentiments,) induce her sons to believe, and rightly too, that a good woman is the best friend and counsellor that man, with all his boasted superiority, can have. My mother united both moral and intellectual pre-eminence, and my father dying when I was only six years old, and knowing that both rank and wealth awaited me, that exemplary woman devoted her life to endeavouring to make me not wholly unworthy of her and of them ; and if I often blush to think that her labour of love has produced no better or more abundant harvest, still I hope that some of the good seed has remained ; for never does an unworthy thought arise in my mind, that, if filtered through the memory of my mother's care, does not become purer and better. To you I am not ashamed to own, that every night brings me back to my childhood, when I knelt at my mother's feet : I still feel her hand upon my head, and hear her blessing, when I have done nothing to forfeit it. To some this might appear puerile—

I pity them—and am content that you are not of the number. Every day convinces me that both evil and good come with the understanding—how much of the latter (or *vice versâ*) within the book of memory, does our reason translate to us, which, when we first heard it, was but as the meaningless sounds of an unknown language. I now know and feel the meaning of my mother's constant injunction to me—to be, and not to seem it, constitutes the only difference between virtue and vice; for the former enables one to adhere on all occasions steadily and resolutely to the right path, the other is a straw in the wind, blown about in every quarter, as accident, inclination, or interest may direct. All mere seemers must be hypocrites, and, while they have a painful tenacity about their character, are not in the least particular as to their conduct, just as a prude cares infinitely more for her reputation than she does for her virtue. Think you, then, that in my conduct towards you, it is the world's opinion I either court or succumb to? No—too well I know the ‘perilous stuff,’ the hollow echoes, the mean interests, and meaner ambitions that world is made of, which chooses its favourites, as the Romans did their generals, solely from being fortunate; for the vice that revolts, and

is unpardonable, when seen through rags, is concealed and becomes charming in velvet. Believe, then, that God and yourself are the sole directors of my conduct, the sole influencers of my motives. Shall I confess it? when I first knew you, you were to me an enigma—at one moment I thought your placidity and endurance arose from that inane sort of apathy, which, happily for themselves, so many of your sex possess — again I attributed it to hatred, which is a strong endurer; but then in hatred there is a buoyancy which bears one up upon the turbulent surface of defiance, and never permits one to ride at anchor on the calm of resignation; of the former you appeared to know nothing, while of the latter you seemed perfect mistress. During this first vague and uncertain dawn of your character, I availed myself of the chartered corruption of society, and allowed myself to be in love with you; but as the meridian splendour and cloudless purity of that character burst upon me—as I found that, like the great heathen's idea of the Deity, your whole nature was truth, and light was its shadow, and that your endurance of injuries and insults arose neither from the impotence of imbecility nor from the supernatural strength of hate, but from the highest and best motives

which human nature is capable of being subdued and impelled by—then, Julia, I loved you ! How I struggled against that love, God and my own heart alone know ; for I could not breathe the same atmosphere with you, without at least trying to become better—yes, my heart,

‘ Like the dark web that whitens in the sun,
Grew pure from being purely shone upon ;’

and if love erected an altar on an unhallowed site, esteem consecrated and made it sacred ; for those feelings which nature refused to make dumb, respect constrained into silence—a silence which never should have been broken but for the circumstances which occurred last night—and how was it broken then ? Ah, Julia ! was it not the voice of your own feelings that echoed through mine, and the sound you had yourself awakened terrified and appalled you ! But be calm, for the echo has died away. Henceforth all shall be silent, though sleepless as before, and the rosy words on that dear lily I will try and remember only as the inscription on those of the statues of Isis, which shall haunt me with the mysterious sounds of—‘ I am all that has been, that shall be, and none among mortals has hitherto taken off my veil.’

“ To prove the sincerity of my resolution, I

would leave you to-morrow, but that the scene of yesterday rushes back upon my memory, and I cannot divest myself of the painful yet delightful idea, that during this journey I may be again some slight protection and of some trifling use to you ; and to leave you ill, deserted, and neglected, is more than I can, than I ought to do. Once in England, you will, at least, be within reach of your own family, and then, or perhaps before then, never will I knowingly obtrude myself into your presence ; but I will not conceal from you, that a shudder comes over me, when I think that there may be a crisis in your fate, too terrible, too overwhelming, for even you to bear up against. Yes, a moment may come, when your endurance, which is as a rock, and your virtue, which is as a beacon, may be wrecked in the dark treachery of an unexpected whirlpool.

“I know an instance, and only one, of a woman who had endured more, because she had loved more than you—and who was a better wife, because there was more scope for sacrifices and exertion in her lot than even in yours. Yes, Julia, that woman had loved her husband deeply and devotedly for years—had anticipated his every wish—concealed his every fault—promoted his every interest, real or ima-

ginary—endured the violence of his temper, which vented itself in acts of personal brutality that, even by his own acknowledgment, amounted to madness—had writhed severely, but silently, under the interference, jealousies, and falsehoods of his family ; nay, more, had played the Griselda, when her hearth and home had been polluted by the presence of his mistresses—(when of her own sphere of life)—and, in point of money, had left herself pennyless to supply his extravagance. All this she did, and all this she bore without a murmur for years, or without even letting her own mother guess at its existence ; and on one occasion, when he had committed a personal outrage on her, of so sanguinary and brutal a nature that he left his house and wrote to her, saying, ‘ that having eternally disgraced himself, he should fly the country, and announce ill health as the reason of his retirement from public life,’ she, generously but foolishly pitying this Lucifer spirit in his fall, who never knew pity for, or remorse about, his conduct to her, brought him back, forgave, and hushed up everything. But to be under such an obligation to a woman, and that woman his wife ! was what his mean sordid nature could never brook ;

and from that moment he organised a deep-laid plot against his poor victim.

“ He spent a whole year in looking out for a mistress, as he would for a house or a horse ; and when he found one to his mind, (a low person, who, with her sisters, kept a school near a watering-place,) the next thing was to take a villa for his wife, so as to have London to himself. This done, finding utter neglect not sufficient, and eternally telling her that they would be happier apart, he then spent six months in endeavouring to goad her into an open rupture, which, for the sake of her children, she was determined not to be goaded into.

“ One day, in especial, she implored him, with tears, to tell her what she had done to displease him, or could do to please him : not in reality being able to say, his only answer was, ‘ *The fact is, I never shall be able to get anything out of my mother, as long as I am on terms with you !*’

“ Against this there was of course no appeal. Time passed on, and having received his strict orders not to presume to go to London, which was within an hour’s drive, she did as she was desired ; till one day, her amiable husband having announced his intention of honouring her with his company at dinner, she waited till nine

o'clock, when one of his grooms brought a letter from him, stating that he was dangerously ill. His wife, believing this, set off for town, whereupon, arriving at his house thus unexpectedly, she found not the invalid she expected, but unequivocal proofs of her husband's new and guilty *liaison*. Indignant and disgusted at the falsehood and wickedness of his whole conduct, she remained in town that night, and wrote him a letter, couched in pretty strong language, that is, calling him by the names he deserved — which, among the well-regulated portion of society, whose words are always irreproachable, let their deeds be what they may, is, I believe, considered an unpardonable offence in a wife.

“Now mark the sequel. Upon the receipt of this *violent letter*, the husband went to a very distant relative of his wife's, (for, as he used to tell her in a manly and honourable manner, she had neither father nor brother, and therefore was completely in his power,) and to this relation he declared upon oath, (though the whole world knew to the contrary,) that it was false about his having a mistress; and that the violence of his wife's temper made it impossible for him to live with her!—that he merely wished the separation to be temporary,

as a short time might bring her to her senses. He then artfully proceeded to give her credit for every possible good quality—temper excepted—which was strange, as he had been for years in the habit of saying that he did not give her as much credit as others did, for the goodness and equanimity of her temper, as *he* considered it merely constitutional. However, it suited his purpose, at this juncture, that she should be a termagant, and, accordingly, such he declared her—adducing, as proofs of his assertion, the letters of an outraged and injured wife, who, after years of devotion and endurance, found, or rather knew herself, and her children, to be turned out of their home, to make way for an abandoned woman, and to save an adulterer the expense of two establishments. Of this *she* was at the time fully aware, and events have proved the truth of her information. But her relation, being a man of strict integrity and chivalric honour himself—though withal of a north-pole temperament, and a great respecter of the *commérage de société*, and cucumber *convenances* of marital authority, did not conceive that there could be any appeal from the solemn word of honour of a *soi-disant gentleman* ! and therefore gave implicit credence to the husband's statement ; negotiating

the whole business much after the fashion of the worthy Scotch professor, who, being disturbed in the solution of his problems by a company of cats that held a concert under his window, threw up the sash, and in the most gentlemanlike and gentle manner, addressed them, as he would have liked himself and his family to have been accosted, by the civil appellations of ladies and gentlemen — accompanied by an equally courteous request that they would choose some other scene of action, and not molest him.

“ Strange to say, this well-bred and pacific line of conduct had not the slightest effect upon his feline tormentors; which induced him to proceed to what *he* thought a very strong and decisive measure; which was, again opening the window, and, in a clear and sonorous voice, reading the riot act to them; but, *mirabile dictu*! this also was unavailing; and the poor professor might have been suffering from their persecution till now, had not a friend opportunely come in and fired a pistol amongst them, which produced more effect than all the learned gentleman’s bland remonstrances.

“ What chance then had mere truth, simplicity, and good intentions, on the part of this distant relation, against the subtle and serpent-

like craft of the clever and unprincipled husband?—who, to the depravity and pliancy of the most abject intrigue, united the vaunting of the most lofty hypocrisy—which, by placing his conduct beyond the reach of investigation, enabled him to stalk triumphantly through the world on the stilts of falsehood. Hopeless of redress from virtuous imbecility on the one side, and clever villany on the other, the poor wife grew desperate, and refused to sign the forced and degrading deed of separation; but into this she was soon compelled by her husband, who, while he was all blandness and apparent fairness to others, the attorneys, &c., wrote her the most intimidating and brutal letters—again reminding her that she had neither father nor brother, and that she had no redress, there being but one law for a woman on such occasions—a law which no woman of the slightest delicacy or feeling would or could resort to. Here, then, *his* every point was gained;—and *her* last struggle was, to remain in her house a few weeks longer, and join in society, that her separation from her husband might not be confounded with that of a notoriously bad character, which had taken place, at the time, on very disgraceful grounds.

“ This the husband agreed to, adding, with

his usual crafty plausibility, to her relative and the attorneys, that whatever redounded to his wife's respectability must conduce to his.

“ So much for his words, while his actions were to try, by every underhand means possible, to prevent her being noticed by any one.

“ She went with her children to a miserable and secluded village in Wales; there she remained for two years, her dear friends in London of course forgetting her with all possible expedition, and thinking it expedient to join forces with her husband; he being a rising man, who kept a good *chef*, and gave political dinners and agreeable *soirées* to the most agreeable and notorious demireps in London. As for his immoralities—‘ fellow feeling’ of course made them ‘ wondrous kind’ on that score; and for certain meannesses and brutalities, which the world, bad as it is, does not and cannot openly countenance, a few colossal and skilful falsehoods soon gilded them into positive virtues or venial errors. Meanwhile his poor wife, added to the great and deep wrongs she had to bear, was surrounded by coarseness and vulgarity, which, while the miserable stipend her husband allowed her compelled her to endure, the habits of her life and her own natural refinement made almost unen-

durable. Still there were her children, and in looking forward to what they would be, from feeling justly proud of what they were, she endeavoured to forget the past by living in the future; and the whole neighbourhood vying with each other in kindness and attention to her, enabled her in some degree to wade through the present. But at length the difficulty of getting masters, and the vulgarity of the *locale*, induced her, for her children's sake, to return to England, and settle about two days' journey from London. This so infuriated her husband, who dreaded the truths that might transpire by her returning so near her former ground, and which her absence and his diplomatic falsehoods had so successfully lulled to sleep, that he resolved upon the last cruelty and outrage in his power to inflict, that of tearing her children from her; but not having a single thing to bring against her, this required even more than his usual caution and plausibility; for though the law of the land gives a father, however openly and notoriously profligate in his conduct, and careless of their interests, inalienable power over the persons of his children, yet the law of opinion always exacts certain dues, which, if not acceded to in *truth*, must be evaded by falsehood.

“ Accordingly, his first pretext was, that he could not leave his children with her until he knew *where* she intended to live.

“ Of course, had he really cared for his children, the *person* they were with, and not the *place* they were in, would have been the source of his anxiety; but, being a thorough-going Whig, *place* was naturally his only object. When informed of his wife’s intended residence, he expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and said he thought it a very good place, and that he had no objection.

“ Here, then, every one would have supposed the matter ended, and she was to have her children; but no—next followed a set of frivolous vexations, and impossible-to-accede-to stipulations, which were—that if he allowed them to remain with her, she must never go out anywhere, as she had gone out more than *he* approved of in Wales, and had not devoted herself sufficiently, according to his notions, to her children. This, from such a father to such a mother, was a little too much. The next stipulation was, that she must neither live in lodgings, nor at an hotel, nor in the house with anybody else. Now this latter stipulation he knew to be impossible; for from the miserable pittance he allowed her, while spending thousands on his

own vices, had it not been for the kindness of friends who permitted her to live with them, she could not have lived at all according to her sphere of life.

“ This last piece of petty tyranny—even the attorney who, in the first instance, had so mismanaged the business and played so completely into the husband’s hands, advised her by no means to submit to. Nor did she—for well she knew that, arbitrary and degrading as the terms were, had she complied with them to the letter, it would not have prevented his exercising the brutal but legal power of taking them from her at a moment’s warning; consequently she steadily and indignantly refused to do so.

“ After some time, she wrote an imploring letter to him, entreating him not to crown all her other injuries by persisting in this most cruel and insupportable of all, and begging him to remember that a time must come when the reflection of not having done *all* the wrong in his power would be a source of far greater satisfaction to him than the remembrance of all his triumphs, whether merited or the reverse.

“ To this, his only reply was a letter of the most brutal upbraiding; this was an autograph, but was soon followed by one from a low attorney, who was in the habit of

chicaning him through his elections, stating that her husband would allow her children to be within ten miles of her, and that she might have free access to them, provided she would give a solemn promise never to attempt to remove them, and a written document expressing her gratitude for his consideration of her feelings evinced in this arrangement. It is needless to say that this was also rejected with scorn, excited to madness by thus having every injury cemented with insult. Upon hearing that he solemnly denied ever having personally ill-used her, she wrote to his mother, (who had first instigated and then screened him through every stage of his misconduct,) because, upon one occasion of greater outrage than usual, she had gone to that unprincipled mother; and in that letter she taxed him with the falsehood of his assertion, and told her that as she wanted nothing from her—for that she would rather beg her own and her children's bread than owe it to her—she could venture to tell her the truth.

“ This was of course made an additional handle against her; and her jesuitical husband gained fresh ground and applause among his own clique, by giving out that he could not allow his children to remain with a woman who had

insulted his mother, though in reality the children had been taken six months before that letter was written : but then the mother was rich, and he has beggared his wife ; and besides, as he justly observes, she has neither father nor brother. But this is a well-judging world—for it always concludes that might is right. And now behold this once-devoted, all-enduring, and over-generous wife, guiltless of all, save having ‘loved not wisely, but too well.’ With her heart torn up by the roots, when her children were torn from her, and with them of course the last lingering feeling she might have had for their father, deprived of her position in society, and cast unprotected, and unprovided for according to her rank in life, upon the world—obliged to write, in order to provide the common comforts she had been accustomed to ; and if she sometimes subsides into calm, every feeling is harrowed up by receiving a dun for some bill of her husband’s mistress, who not only has usurped her home, but her name. What wonder, then, that her pen is sometimes dipped in gall ? Yet the world, which never troubles itself about the truth of anything, is always ready to exclaim, (especially those virtuous ladies, who, while they are dishonouring their indulgent lords, never perform

a single wifelike duty,) how very wrong of a wife ever to write *at* her husband; though the better and more respectable portion of society wonder at nothing, when they know the provocation. Besides, the reaction of so much forbearance is always in extremes, just as the sweetest wine makes the sharpest vinegar; but women, being considered by men as nonentities in the scale of creation, are not allowed to have, or at least to express, any feelings of indignation, let them have sustained what injuries and outrages they may; whereas, were a tinker or a chimney-sweep wronged but a hair's breadth by his fellow man, and that man were a monarch, could the former get up a revolution to avenge his quarrel, he may chance to take the monarch's place, and at all events descend a ready-made hero to posterity; but woe betide the woman who has

‘ The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance soon blown to fire
Of ardent love, or headlong ire ;’

unless, indeed, she has been the heroine of a disgraceful and disgusting trial, and is the tool of a political faction; then her profligacy and its triumphs may attain to masculine immunities, and a political party may be organised to

force her again upon society, even against the ordinary rules of its Tartuffe code, which has adopted for its principle,

“ Pêcher en secret n'est pas pêcher,
Ce n'est que l'eclât qui fait le crime.”

But if she be only ‘sinned against,’ not sinning, it is thought particularly shocking if she does not submit to every species of tyranny, insult, and injustice, without a murmur; and for half the women in the world who are content to attain their petty and ignoble ends by low cunning and small craft, silent submission is a sort of Fortunatus’s cap; but I, who believe intellect to be epicine, also believe that there are women, who, like Coriolanus, have natures

. . . . “ too noble for the world ;”
That would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for his power to thunder. Their hearts their
mouth :
What their breast forges, that their tongue must vent ;
And being angry, do forget that ever
They heard the name of death.”

“ If it be true, and that it is, I for one have no doubt, “ Que toutes belles pensées viennent du cœur,” it must be from the heart that esteem proceeds; and therefore mere intellectual

pre-eminence, unpoised by the ballast of moral excellence, can never command it. It is easy for the world, who view the phantasmagoria of life as they do that of a magic lantern, looking merely to the delusive effects produced by certain ugly and invisible machinery, to be dazzled and deceived by brilliant talents ; but the poor drudges condemned to the care and display of the fantoccini may not be quite so charmed ; and that country must be an immoral one, where the mirage of a man's public life is allowed to cast a sanctifying vapour over the plague-spots of his private character, which is treated as an Eleusinian mystery, and seems to be defended by the all-powerful *μυστήριον*, that threatens nothing short of death, or divine vengeance, if revealed. As a case in point, the husband I have been telling you about, made his debût as a father by turning his first child out of the house the moment it was born, saying that he would not have his wife's time and affection monopolised by any d——d child. Yet this very man gets up on a hustings, and, speaking of the poor laws, makes the following beautiful and benevolent peroration :—

“ ‘ And above all I am opposed to that peculiar vice in the present system, which, contrary to all the nearest and dearest ties of

nature, and the honest rights of humanity, would separate a man, often towards the painful decline of life, from the partner who has shared all his trials, and from the children who have been, perhaps, the solitary sources of comfort and hope that a long career of labour has enjoyed.' Now, the mob who heard this no doubt thought it exquisite, and that Howard the philanthropist was a Nero to their worthy member ; but no one can be surprised that his wife and a few more who knew *les dessous des cartes*, smiled with disgust, and thought, as Miss Biddy Fudge did, about that most amiable of scoundrels Jean Jacques"—

' Alas ! that a man of such exquisite notions,
Should send his poor brats to the Foundling, my dear.'

" Julia ! it is a similar crisis I dread for you. Fancy yourself rewarded for your years of forbearance and endurance, by having your child torn from you—could you bear it ?"

" I answer for you, that you could not ; and that the same energy, which now enables you to bear and to conceal, would then excite you to resist and to expose ; but my fears outstrip probability. You have a father, and you have brothers ; and the case I have alluded to will, I trust, remain as it now is—unique.

“ Still, vague and sickening apprehensions crowd through my heart, when I think what *may* be ; for a man that indulges in acts of personal violence towards his wife, must of necessity have recourse to so many falsehoods, and so much meanness, to retain his position in the world’s opinion, that time infallibly obliterates even the shadow of respect which every virtuous woman wishes and tries to feel for her husband, be that husband what he may ; and it is this stage of your married life that I dread ; for the lady whose history I have just detailed to you I have known these ten years ; and no two human beings ever differed more widely from each other, than that woman does now from her former self.

“ When first I knew her, she was gay, happy, and confiding ; ‘ with eyes that seem’d to love whate’er they looked upon.’ Now she knows no alternations but despair and frenzy ; and the greatest proof of friendship any one could evince towards her, would only make her ask, ‘ I wonder how soon they’ll turn upon me ?’

“ There is something fearful in the breaking of a woman’s heart. Her struggles against fate are so exhausting, yet so fruitless—her hopes of redress so impossible,—as well might a poor

wretch, laden with irons in a condemned cell when a prison was on fire, hope or attempt to escape merely by their own crippled exertions, or by appeals to stone walls for mercy, as woman attempt to resist man's tyranny when he chooses to exercise it.

“ When I think of these things, I fear that you must almost hate our whole sex, for the sake of one. And I scarcely have courage to offer you a friendship, which time and circumstances alone can convince you is as pure as warm, and as generous as your own heart.

“ At present I feel that its only test must be negatives; that it will be evinced, not by what I do, but by what I abstain from doing. And oh! should that blessed time ever come, when you may demand more active and substantial proofs of it, you shall find that the word *impossible* does not exist for me.

“ Who can tell when the hidden and fragile threads that hold our destinies may break? Should mine snap first, you and your child will inherit all I possess. If we may not share it now, it will still be a bond between us, to think that what is mine will be yours.

“ I was told last night, by that young bear Charles Dinely, that my poor uncle Cheveley was going fast. He was in every respect the

antipodes of my mother—being gloomy, misanthropical, and morose. I have not seen him since I was fourteen, when unfortunately I offended him mortally; for while playing battledore in the library, the shuttlecock happened to fall upon his nose, when he was overhearing over one of Lord Grey's speeches. That very night saw me safely returned to my mother, with many dark prophecies concerning my future fate, which were anything but flattering to her hopes or my vanity.

“ Disgusted, as I am, with the profligate, personal, and pyritic tone of politics in the present day, I shall not be sorry to be removed from the Commons' House; which, instead of representing the people, as they profess to do, in reality only represent the minister, whose tools they are; for, were they the faithful stewards of the interests of their country, the careful checks on the administration of its finance, and the honest and incorruptible advisers of the executive branch of its legislature, I doubt whether they would dabble in or countenance that political alchemy, which can transmute the same measure that was vituperated as destruction to the country when brought forward by one minister, into its salvation when resorted to as a *pis aller* by his successor.

“ To conquer this corruption is next to impossible, as long as the people delegate legislative power to pauper representatives, who, though they make their interests the stepping-stone, have in reality only their own individual advancement in view ; and though no one can deny that occasionally bright and glorious characters have arisen from among the people themselves, who, in spite of the general corruption and depravity of the times in which they lived, have manifested the superior influence of integrity and wisdom, yet it would be, or rather it is, unwise for the people of England to trust their fate to the chance of such luminaries often arising, instead of establishing their liberties and properties on the only sure foundation, which was the original intention of the constitution to create,—namely, a strict relation between themselves and the House of Commons, and then they would not be the dupes of those splendid legislative clap-traps, baited with popular fallacies, which enable their leaders so successfully to betray the public interest, while they appear to succumb to and be actuated by public opinion. However, I foresee that the Repeal of the Union will soon supersede, as a matter of dispute, excitement, and tergiversation, the Catholic Question and the Reform Bill ;

and upon this question it is most likely the present ministry will totter to their fall.

“But enough of politics—though the happiness of writing to you, next to that of conversing with you, gives an interest to any subject which may be the means of prolonging that happiness. Forgive me, then, if I have in this instance been selfish enough to gratify myself at your expense. Knowing, as I do, the unselfishness of your nature, I cannot but prophesy much happiness to you in your sister’s fate; for a more amiable, honourable, or high-minded fellow than Saville does not exist; and there is a sufficient difference in their characters, and unity in their *principles* and *opinions*, to insure their mutual welfare; for while too great a sameness of disposition invariably produces ennui in married life, yet opposite principles and opinions as invariably produce dissensions, or something worse. Principles being things with very deep and tenacious roots, no one possessing them cares to eradicate them; so the uttermost a woman can do, (whose part it is always to yield,) is to suppress or control them: and as even this is not to be done *per saltum*, but by degrees, the danger is, that she may retrograde often, and weary eventually in the task.

“ As friends, Saville’s and my sympathy ceases. Hitherto, every thought of my heart has been bared to his inspection ; but now that I have but *one* thought, and that thought is *you*, it must be veiled from all beholders : besides, out of *small* things, there is no such thing as sympathy ; for even though people know *all* that you do, they do not know it *as* you do : and even though they feel *for* you, they cannot feel *with* you. As well might a chameleon expect the eyes that looked upon it to change their colour every time it changed its hues, as expect any other heart to sympathise with all the shades of feeling that chequer our own.

“ But in *our* case—ah, Julia ! how I love that little word, which, in spite of fate itself, unites us—in our case, what could we hope from friends but frowning displeasure—liberal donations of advice rendered formidable by a *chevaux de frise* of prudence, to which we never could hope to attain ?

“ With regard to your dear, dear self, individually, I cannot think without torture—and it is not to oppress and disturb you more than you already are, but to nerve and prepare you—that in this letter I have so often urged you to turn your thoughts to the future, which,

impossible as it now seems to you, *may* be worse than the present. For what cannot want of feeling and want of principle, when combined with power, craft, and hypocrisy, accomplish? Indeed, when exercised against a wife, *power* is sufficient. ‘For,’ as Sir Thomas Baker says, speaking of Anne Bullen, ‘who knows not that nature is not more able of an acorn to make an oak, than authority is able of the least surmise to make a *certainty*.’ Whenever this, by me, much-dreaded crisis should arrive—O *then*, Julia, remember, that in me you will have a stanch, a devoted, a considerate friend; and objectionable and unavailing as such friendship may *now* appear, it may yet be able to fulfil its whole and sole end—*your* welfare. God, the disposer of all things, alone knows what the ever-changing and shifting scenes of life may next bring forth; but I do think, that even in this world he does not suffer wrong always to prevail, nor those whom he chasteneth to be tried beyond their strength; ‘but will, with the temptation, also make a way of escape.’

“In him then, in whom you have all along trusted, *still trust*. I dread ending this letter; for, in sealing it, I shall feel as if I were sealing our fate—that all is ended—that our last words

are spoken. But what are words ? They are but the body of thought, which *is* the soul. Many may have loved as deeply, (though I doubt it,) but none ever loved more purely than I do. Could it be otherwise, when it is *you* I love ? O Julia ! my heart has become a well of deep, deep love for you ; and thoughts of you, like stars above it, are the only images it reflects. What, then, can sully the purity of its waters, or dim the hope, the fervency, and the sincerity, with which I shall now and ever say,

“ God bless you !

“ AUGUSTUS MOWBRAY.”

As soon as Mowbray had enclosed and sealed this letter, he placed it within the leaves of that most exquisite little volume, M. de Saintine's “ Picciola,” which he had promised to lend Lady de Clifford ; and again carefully sealing that up, he rang for Sanford, and ordered him to give it to her maid, with his compliments, to know how she was.

No sooner was it fairly gone, than he paced the room restless and dissatisfied with all he had said, and still more with all he had left unsaid. Alternately he reproached himself with not having more improved the only opportunity

that might ever occur of writing to Julia, by wasting so many words upon indifferent subjects, and immediately after felicitated himself upon having resorted to the only expedient by which he could have ventured to prolong his letter. But who ever yet wrote such a letter, and was satisfied with what they had written? for is not love

————— “ all made of fantasy,
All made of passion, and all made of wishes ;
All adoration, duty, and observance ;
All humbleness, all patience and impatience ;
All purity, all trial, all observance ;”

in short, all contradictions?

At length, exhausted with fatigue both of mind and body, Mowbray flung himself upon the bed, but was too feverish and dispirited to sleep.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ Patience, unmoved, no marvel though she pause ;
They can be meek that have no other cause.
A wretched soul, bruised with adversity,
We bid be quiet when we hear it cry ;
But were we burden'd with like weight of pain,
As much or more we should ourselves complain.”

SHAKESPEARE.

“ Though you have tried that nothing's borne
With greater ease than public scorn,
That all affronts do still give place
To your impenetrable face,
That makes your way through all affairs,
As pigs through hedges creep with theirs ;
Yet, as 'tis counterfeit and brass,
You must not think 'twill always pass.”

HUDIBRAS.

“ No thread of candour woofs her web of wiles.”

BYRON.

THE morning after Madame de A.'s ball, the dowager Lady de Clifford was sitting before her toilet-table, upon which were ranged, not indeed

“ Twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt,”

but a pile of war-novels—a species of literature in which her ladyship much delighted and often indulged. At the other side of the table were two sets of teeth, the Elizabethan ruff she had worn on the preceding night, and a green fan. Frump was busily employed brushing her mistress's hair, who was as busily employed reading "The Star of Fashion," by Anthony Frederick Holstein, when a knock came to the door.

"Frump, Frump! see who's there," said her ladyship, throwing her handkerchief over the false teeth.

Frump opened the door at first cautiously, but, seeing that it was Lord de Clifford, opened it widely as she said, "It's Lord de Clifford, my lady."

"O come in, my dear; I did not think you'd have been stirring so soon after the ball last night, which, by-the-bye, I thought *vaustly* stupid."

"D——n the ball!" said he, throwing himself into a chair, folding his dressing-gown about him, and then his arms, as he frowned at Frump and his mother, as much as to say, "Tell her to go away."

"You may go, Frump," said her ladyship, taking the hint, "and I'll ring when I want you."

Long practice had rendered this amiable lady as skilful in detecting her son's changes of humour and impending storms, as the Chinese are in foreseeing change of weather, from the variations of colour in their stone man near Vuchen, on the top of the hill of Vangkiu.

“What is it, my dear?” inquired she, as soon as Frump had closed the door.

“O that d——d woman pretends that I have hurt or put her wrist out of joint, because I just touched her last night for answering me impertinently.”

“Which—who—my dear?”

“Why, Lady de Clifford. Not that I'd care what the d——l she said; only in a place of this sort everything gets about, and one does not like to be talked of.”

“Very just observation, my dear; but how did it happen?”

“Why, last night, instead of going for some books I asked her for, she very impertinently pointed to where they were; and I struck her hand, but in a way that could not have hurt a fly; and yet she has made a perfect uproar about it, by going to bed, and sending for a doctor; and that d——d maid of hers has belled about through the hotel that she will never be able to use her hand again.”

“ I’m sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *hort* that you were so mild under such terrible provocation ; but it would have been more prudent in this ill-natured world, where things are so misrepresented, if you had not touched her ; but you see, my dear, you are too open and candid ; but, as I always tell you, you would be so much happier and freer in every way living *eng gor-song*, and when we return to England we must see and contrive it. And the little *gurl* might be sent to school, as I think it’s giving her mother too much power to leave her with her ; but all this is for future consideration—the thing is now to decide upon what we had best do. Let me see,” continued she, putting two fingers of her right hand against her cheek, and the other two on her chin, as was her wont when constructing a falsehood or a plot—“ let me see—the best plan will be both for you and me to be very civil and attentive to her, and to be loud in our regrets to every one in the house about Lady de Clifford’s accident : be sure, my dear, not to forget to call it ‘ accident ’—never say ‘ hurt. ’ ”

“ You are quite right, my dear ma’am, but you *are* so clever—I never knew such a head for business in my life ; it’s a d—l of a bore,

but do you think I had better go down to her now?"

"No, my dear—you had better let me pave the way by seeing her first, and in order to do so, I'll write her a note, to ask when she will see me."

"I'm sure, my dear ma'am, you are extremely kind, and I feel greatly obliged to you—and, as you say, it would be much better if I could get rid of her altogether; but you see there is so much cant in the world, that it requires great skill and caution in managing it."

"Very just observation, my dear, but—" here another knock came to the door.

"Who's there?" cried the dowager sharply.

"It's only me, my dear mamma," wooed Mr. Herbert Grimstone through the keyhole, "who wish to know how you are after the fatigues of last night?"

"O, come in, my dear."

And in Mr. Herbert Grimstone came, after having imprinted a gallant kiss on his mother's skinny hand, and told her, that after her appearance, and the sensation she created the night before, he no longer doubted the description of Queen Elizabeth's beauty as given in the chronicles! He turned to his brother—

“Well, my dear fellow, and how are you?”

“Sadly plagued, my dear, about this here tiresome business,” said his mother, answering for him.

“What business?” asked Herbert.

Here followed a false and garbled statement of poor Julia’s disjointed wrist, which when he had heard, Mr. Herbert Grimstone, after his usual preliminary grasp of the five hairs on his right temple with the extended palm and whole five fingers of his right hand, affectionately turned first to his mother, and next to his brother, with—

“Well, my dear ma’am—well, my dear De Clifford, what do you wish me to do? I’ll be guided entirely by you. Shall I go to Julia, and tell her that you can’t possibly live with her after such conduct—eh?”

“O, my dear fellow, I’m sure you’re very kind,” said Lord de Clifford, taking Herbert’s extended hand, “but——”

Here their amiable mother interrupted this *nobile fratrum* to explain her plan on the occasion, of which Mr. Herbert Grimstone approved as highly as his brother had previously done, and then said—

“Perhaps, then, I had better go down and sit with her, and tell her about the ball—that will look affectionate and attentive, and all that sort

of thing ; and if she hints at my brother having struck her, I can reason with her, and tell her how much better it will be for her to say nothing about it, but pass it off as an accident."

"Very just observation, my dear."

"But as I before said, my dear *mamma*," resumed Herbert, "I am quite ready to do whatever you and my brother wish. By-the-bye, my dear fellow, I had a letter from Protocol this morning, and if Denham remains at St. Petersburg, I have no doubt of being appointed Secretary of Legation. One of his daughters would be a devilish good speculation—one could but be refused, you know, and it would be an epoch in one's life even to have been *near* getting forty thousand pounds. Ha ! ha ! ha !"

"Ah, so it would," replied his brother, "but it would be a better speculation still if you succeeded, for I have no doubt of Denham's ultimately being premier."

"At all events," said Herbert, "I know his intention is to return to England at the next favourable crisis, and try to be Minister for Foreign Affairs."

"But what the deuce will Lord Melford do with Protocol ? for after thirty years' tenacious adherence to office, through the most sudden chances and extreme changes, I should think

he would not be easily ousted or transferred," said Lord de Clifford.

"True, but you see Denham calculates upon the friendship and influence of a certain illustrious lady, and if that influence really exists to the extent he believes, Protocol, nor even Melford himself, dare scarcely run counter to it. As things are likely to turn out, I am deuced sorry that I did not from the first pay more attention to the rising sun, and boldly adopt a more decidedly radical line of politics; but then you see, as long as Shuffleton's interest was unshaken, one did not well know what to do."

"Tut, tut, tut, my dear," cried his mother, placing her hand upon Herbert's arm, "don't talk of being radical; you know, as I always say, I'm a Tory—I think it's what all landed proprietors ought to be."

"Very true, my dear mamma," replied Herbert laughing, and again gallantly kissing his revered parent's hand, "and when I am a landed proprietor I'll be a Tory too, or anything else you please."

Now, fond as her ladyship was of the term "landed proprietor," as applied to the first person singular, she had a mortal dislike to the remotest allusion to the reversion of landed property, and therefore instantly changed the subject by saying to her sons—

“ Well, my dears, you had better go now, for I must write this here tiresome note to Lady de Clifford.”

Rejoiced at the command, the brothers did not “ stand upon the order of their going,” but “ went at once.” As soon as they had departed, their mother sat down and wrote the following affectionate little note to her daughter-in-law :

“ DEAR MADAM,

“ I much regret hearing of the bad accident which you met with, and which prevented our having the pleasure of seeing you at the ball last night. I hope, my dear madam, you instantly sent for medical advice, as the money given to doctors is, I am sure, the *d'argent* de Clifford grudges least. I am sorry not to be at Blichingly now, that I might send you some game, as being able to supply our friends with game is the greatest pleasure we landed proprietors have. Should it be agreeable to you, I will do myself the pleasure of going to sit with you this morning. You see, by this offer of going into your room, I treat you quite *en famille*, but I think the less ceremony among friends the better.

“ I remain, my dear Madam,

“ Yours truly,

“ E. B. B. DE CLIFFORD.”

Who could be critical as to *l'eloquence du billet*, where there was so much affection and sincerity, as in the foregoing note? Hannah More used to say, "that letters between relations should be a sort of family newspaper." Now the Dowager Lady de Clifford's epistolary effusions were so far on this model, that they might have passed for *jeux d'esprit* extracted from the Kentucky Gazette or Boston Transcript. As soon as she had sealed the amiable note in question with yellow wax and a large bread seal, containing, by way of motto, in corpulent old English letters, the word "L'Amitié," surrounded by a wreath of sunflowers, Frump was rung for, and it was despatched. Poor Lady de Clifford, who had passed a feverish and painful night, had just awoke about noon from an opium sleep, and found her sister and her child sitting by her bedside, the latter with her little cheek leaning on her mother's hand.

"Dear mamma," said she, as soon as she perceived she was awake, "how did you hurt your other poor hand, that it is so tied up? besides, I know that you must have been very ill, for Berryl would not let either Tiney or Zoe into the room, and, poor little things, they have been moaning so all the morning up stairs.

“ Yes, how did you hurt your hand, dear ?” asked Fanny, as she stooped to kiss her sister’s burning cheek.

“ I scarcely know,” said Lady de Clifford, pressing Fanny’s hand, and looking towards Julia, as much as to say, “ Don’t ask me before her ;” and before Fanny had time to ask any further questions, Berryl entered with Mowbray’s parcel.

“ Mr. Mowbray’s compliments, to know how you are this morning, my lady,” said Berryl, handing it to her ; “ and is your ladyship well enough to see Mr. Herbert, who is at the door ?”

“ Yes—no—that is,” said Lady de Clifford, pushing “ Picciola” under the pillow, “ my compliments to Mr. Mowbray, I am better this morning ; but I am really not well enough to see Mr. Grimstone.”

Berryl delivered this answer ; whereupon the affectionate Herbert put his head in at the door, and said in a voice, like honey spread on velvet—

“ My dearest Julia ! I am grieved beyond measure to hear of your sad accident ; and you have no idea the state my brother is in about you. Is there anything on earth I can do for you ?”

“Shut the door, Berryl,” said Fanny, affecting not to hear the voice from the honeycomb, though in reality feeling the sting of its hypocrisy; “the draught is too much for Lady de Clifford.”

As one of kindness was the only office Mr. Herbert Grimstone had no ambition to fill, so it was the sole one from which he had no reluctance to retire; therefore he pocketed Miss Neville’s affront, and withdrew; but he had scarcely done so, before the door was assailed with another knock. It was Frump, with the dowager’s note.

“*H’ill* thank you, Mrs. Frump, if you please,” said Berryl, sharply, as she took the note, “not to knock in such an *obstropolus* manner, when *my* lady *his* *hill*.”

“*Missus* wants a *hanser*, if you please, *mum*,” said the plebeian Frump, without taking the slightest notice of the aristocratic Berryl’s reproof.

“Open it, dear, will you?” said Lady de Clifford to Fanny, as soon as the note was brought to her; “who is it from?”

Miss Neville made no other answer than by reading it aloud in old Lady de Clifford’s voice and manner, though her gravity nearly gave way when she came to the *d’argent*. When

she had finished it, she turned to her sister and said, " Well, my dear madam, what do you mean to do ? "

" You know I must see her," groaned Julia, " so I suppose the sooner I get it over, the better. My compliments, Berryl, and I shall be ready to see Lady de Clifford whenever it suits her convenience; and Julia, darling, go with Berryl; she wants to get you ready to go out."

No sooner were the sisters left alone, than poor Lady de Clifford gave way to a flood of tears.

" Fy upon you, sister mine," said Fanny, throwing her arms round her neck, and hiding her own tears by mingling them with her sister's, " how can you let such a set of contemptible reptiles sting and worry you to death in this way? A woman with your mind and your sense should be above it, and beyond them. Were I you, or even were I in your place, being only what I am, which is not to be compared with you by a million of worlds, I would neutralise all their venom by sovereign contempt."

" Ah! Fanny, if you were me, you would do as I do. Reason and mind are strong things, especially in the abstract; but what are they, when opposed to the overwhelming power that

springs from the weakness of a broken heart ? It is not of my husband's cruelty, his neglect, nor even of the insult of his unconcealed infidelities that I complain, so much as of the crafty, cold-blooded hypocrisy I am eternally called upon to endure ; and the junto formed by himself, his mother, and his brother, who are for ever plotting, not only against my present but my future peace. At every personal outrage I receive, I am compelled to league against myself, by authenticating falsehoods to screen them. As far as the world goes, this I would gladly do ; but to carry the jest so far as to be obliged to appear to them as if I believed their foulest deeds fair, when they choose that I should do so, is a little too much."

" Indeed it is, and too long have you borne it ; were I you, I would conceal it no longer, but let them take the consequence of their conduct."

" I should find little redress, I fear, by so doing, for you know the frightful power that is vested in men, and there are certain mean tyrannical natures that always do a greater to justify a lesser wrong."

" Very true," said Fanny, " I am fully aware that all breaches,

. . . . ' though small at first, soon opening wide,
In rushes folly with a full-moon tide ;
Then welcome errors, of whatever size,
To justify it by a thousand lies ;'

but still, as I said before, if you did not shield that detestable family quite so much, you would fare the better for it: for instance, although you have not said it, I am as convinced as that I am sitting here, that it was some fresh piece of violence on the part of my brutal *beau-frère* which has bruised and blackened your hand in that frightful manner; and when his vile old mother comes insulting you with her hypocritical condolences upon what she is pleased to mystify as your accident, I would boldly tell her that it was no accident, but more of her amiable son's handiwork, for which she will no doubt reward and applaud him. Brute as he is, I really think him an angel of light, compared to that withered old bale of wickedness."

"My dear Fanny," said Lady de Clifford, shaking her head, "I fear that would do me little good, for there is no redress for a woman, publicly or privately: our sex have no *esprit de corps*, but are, with very few exceptions, so weak and so wicked, as upon all occasions to aid and abet the other sex by countenancing

their profligacy, and upholding their tyranny and injustice. Were women but true to themselves and to each other, their position as human beings would be widely different from what it now is, and ever must be, while they continue satisfied with being the degraded nonentities they are at present. I am no advocate for the ridiculous and immoral chimera, called the 'Rights of Women,'—for they have no rights—at least none that can or ought to empower them to fill those masculine niches in the world, which would authorise them to kill their fellow-creatures as soldiers, cajole them as statesmen, or cheat them as lawyers. A woman's proper and only empire is her home, and unless her nature could be physically changed—that is, unless she could cease to be woman—it never can or ought to be any other; but still there should be some cruelty to animal act that would extend its protection to her in that sphere. If every man that has been notorious in the violation of his duty and cruelty to one woman, were shunned and condemned by every other on the strength of it, instead of (as is now the case) being not only tolerated, but additionally countenanced, the number of domestic tragedies would sensibly decrease, and eventually almost cease to exist. How different is the con-

duct of men with regard to their own sex ! It is neither their imaginary intellectual nor their real superiority of physical strength, nor even the laws they themselves have made, which constitute their omnipotence, half so much as the indissoluble manner in which they invariably uphold and support each other ; for let them be ever so generous, high-minded, and chivalric in their feeling towards women, yet no sooner do they cabal together, when the injuries of a woman are the mooted point, than some corresponding and sympathetic chord of interest, feeling, vice, passion, or prejudice, is sure to be struck, which induces them to coalesce with those whom they have abstractedly condemned and theoretically opposed.”

“ All you say, Julia, is but too true, and ,’ added Fanny, musingly, “ I wish to goodness I could be an optimist, and then I should have some chance of being content ; but it is the diving and doubting that distracts one, and suggesting amendments in one’s own mind to certain persons and things, which Providence evidently does not coincide in, as Hume says in one of his dialogues concerning natural religion. Some small touches given to the brain of Caligula in his infancy might have converted him into a Trajan. One wave a little higher

than the rest, by burying Cæsar and his fortunes in the bottom of the sea, might have restored liberty to a considerable part of mankind. There may, for aught we know, be good reasons why Providence interposes not in this manner, but they are unknown to us; and though the mere supposition that such reasons exist may be sufficient to save the conclusion concerning the Divine attributes, yet surely it never can be sufficient to establish that conclusion."

"Dear Fanny, that was a very natural doubt for David Hume; but I should be sorry if it continued to be yours. I was lately reading a little work of Krummacher's, called 'The Vision of the Night,' which would, I think, satisfactorily answer all your doubts, if indeed the Scriptures have not already done so; and do you not remember, in Isaiah, that cheering promise—'For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee; neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy upon thee?' "

"Yes," replied Fanny, "that is one among the many assurances amid the words of everlasting life, sufficient to support us through the most galling and perplexing trials, did we but remember them to ponder upon; but unfortu-

nately it is the characteristic of great affliction to banish every thought but what relates to itself."

"Alas ! that is true," said Julia, "since there is even a divine instance of it on record ; for our Saviour himself, in the sharpness of his mortal agony, cried out, ' My God, my God ! why hast thou forsaken me ? ' and in great distress we never can collect or subdue our thoughts sufficiently to remember that our sufferings are God's especial will, which would enable us to submit ourselves to them ; but are all too apt to imagine that nothing but desertion of us on the part of the Almighty can account for our persecution, and yet, were our thoughts sufficiently with God to have him always in them, I am convinced this would not be the case."

"Certainly ; but do you not, in common with every one else, find that it is the petty envyings, the low hypocrisies, and the small deceptions—in short, the insects of life, that sting and irritate one out of a healthy equanimity of mind ? Every great calamity brings with it a certain degree of dignity sufficient for its support ; to say nothing of their being of rarer occurrence ; and if one might be allowed to choose one's own misfortunes, I think there are few, if any, who would not prefer being torn to pieces by a lion

to being stung to death by gnats. For instance, Julia, confess that you find it easier to endure your husband's wholesale ill usage, than the retail attacks of his old wasp of a mother, or the puny buzzings of his gnat of a brother?"

Whatever reply Lady De Clifford might have returned to this last question of her sister's, was prevented by a knock at the door.

"Fanny," said the former, turning very pale, "will you see who is at the door, dear?"

"My dear madam," replied Fanny, assuming the dowager's voice, and paddle-like motion of the hands, "I have no doubt it's the wasp coming to pay you the little affectionate visit she threatened, with, I suppose, the laudable intention of assuring you that her son is the best husband in the world."

"Pray," cried Julia, catching her sister's sleeve as she rose to go to the door, "don't leave me if it is her, for I can't bear to be alone with that woman."

"Nor shall you, dear, for *you* don't know how to answer or deal with her."

"Pray, pray, Fanny, for my sake, don't say anything to her."

"I won't," said Fanny, "unless the case should be *very urgent*."

Here another knock compelled Fanny to open the door.

“ My dear madam,” said the dowager, passing Fanny with a stiff bow, and advancing to the bedside, where poor Lady De Clifford had closed her eyes to shut out so disagreeable a vision, “ I am *vaustly* sorry to hear of *this here* terrible accident. I assure you De Clifford has been in a terrible way about it—really his conduct has been quite lover-like;”—here the ancient dissembler threw back her head, paddled her hands, and creaked out one of her vulpine smiles, which always had an unnatural appearance; for her muscles, albeit unused to the merry mood, seemed rusty and obdurate in the extreme; “and the only thing, my dear madam,” continued she, “ that at all consoled him, was your having had the prudence to send for a physician. I hope, I am sure, that he’s been of service, and that you are not in much pain now.”

“ Thank you,” said Julia, in a low and languid voice, “ I am easier now.”

“ It was *vaustly* provoking, my dear madam,” resumed the dowager, with still more *empressement* and hypocrisy than before, “ and we all regretted it extremely. De Clifford was quite

dull the whole evening, I assure you, that you should have been prevented coming to the ball by this *here* sad accident."

Fanny, who had been fidgeting about in her chair during the whole of this speech, could keep silent no longer, but said in a clear, distinct, and haughty tone—

"Your ladyship appears to be under some strange mistake about my sister's hand; for she was not hurt by any accident, but by a blow from Lord de Clifford."

Here ensued another rusty smile, another toss back of the head, and more paddling of the hands on the part of the dowager, as she said, turning to Julia—

"You see, my dear madam, gentlemen are so rough in their *bodinawge*,* that they are apt sometimes to do mischief when they least intend it; but," continued she, looking mothers-in-law at Fanny, raising her voice, and speaking with increased volubility, as though determined she would not be interrupted, "the worst thing you can do is to let your hand hang down; for I remember once, when my mother hurt her hand, she was ordered not to take it out of a sling for a month. I'll relate you the circumstance:—my mother was a vaustly *sperited* woman, and

* In plain French, *badinage*.

you must know, Lady de Clifford, it was the fashion in those days for ladies to drive themselves; and one evening she was driving in her phaeton rather late, on her return to Blichingly, across Hounslow Heath, when she was overtaken by a highwayman on a very *sperited* horse, in a black mask.* Now my mother being, as I before mentioned, one of the most *sperited* women of her day, never travelled without her pistols—so immediately drawing one, she shot the robber dead, which caused him to fall back in his saddle, and relinquish his grasp of her left hand, which he had tightly seized. Seeing that he was incapable of further resistance, with that wonderful presence of mind which never forsook her, she gave the reins to the groom, and getting out of the carriage, proceeded to search the robber's pockets, in which she found two heavily-laden purses, three watches, the miniature of a lady set with brilliants, and a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles, a boot-hook, a corkscrew, and a toothpick-case, all of which she sent to Bow-street the next day, except the corkscrew, which I have now at Blichingly. After this she drove off as fast as possible, and

* It is to be presumed that it was the man, and not the horse, that wore the mask as above stated.—*Printer's Devil.*

never even mentioned the circumstance till the next morning at breakfast, when, on looking over the *noospapers*, I saw a paragraph headed, ‘Wonderful courage of a lady;’ and after I had read out the account I have just given you, my mother, (who was breaking a rusk in her chocolate with her right hand, her left being in a sling from the wrench the robber had given it,) said, in as cool a voice as if she had been asking for a cup of tea, ‘My dear, that was me. I did not think the circumstance worth mentioning last night.’ Oh, she was a wonderful woman, my dear madam, so *vaustly spe-rited!*”

“Wonderful indeed!” said Fanny, her face buried in her handkerchief, almost convulsed with laughter.

Luckily at this crisis Berryl entered with some books and a parcel, which she gave to the dowager who, opening the latter, drew from it a very dingy beetroot-coloured ten-shilling china crape shawl, which she presented to Lady de Clifford, saying—

“My dear madam, here is a *rale Ingee** shawl I met with the other day, and as you have such *vaustly* good taste in dress, I thought it would be the very thing for you.”

* Anglice, Indian.

After which, with that generosity of spirit which the truly noble-minded always feel, to silence Julia's thanks, she began heaping fresh benefits upon her by adding—

“ And here, my dear madam, are some books, which I thought might amuse you, for the novels some years back were much more amusing, and better written, than those of the present day. Let me see, here is a *vaustly* interesting one—‘ The Innocent Adulteress, and the Humane Assassin ;’ ‘ The Handsome Major ; or, who the D——l can he be ? by a young Lady of Fashion ;’ ‘ The Fortunate Village Maid ; or, Memoirs of the Marchioness of L.V. ;’ ‘ Read and find out what it Means ;’ ‘ She's off with the Footman ; or, Who'd have thought it ?’—and here, my dear madam, is a *vaustly* curious old book, in another style, not exactly a novel,” and her ladyship raised her glass, and read out the following tempting bill of fare :—
‘ The Law and Lawyers laid Open ; in Twelve Visions, setting forth the Grievances of the Law, and the Remedies proposed ; A Description of a Court of Justice ; The Trial of Peter Puzzle ; Cause Postponed, and why ; A Lawyer and a Catchpole ; Identical Trial of Peter Puzzle ; Cause resumed ; His Crimes and Sentence ; A comical Trial of a Piece of a Lawyer,

and a Patch of an Author ; Tim, the Cozener —his Trial and Abuse of Foreigners, to the Scandal of his Country ; On Britannia's Complaint—receives Sentence as the defamer of his Country ; The Despairing Judge ; Opinion of the Bench on his Case ; The Skip turned Bencher ; Three Brethren very Far North contend for the Chancellorship, which Ends in a Fray ; An honest Attorney, permitted to speak for himself, is advanced near the Bench ; Modesty having a Cause desires to choose her Counsel, and has leave—she rejects a Multitude, and at last pitches on Faz—— and Young K——by ; the Grand Question debated, whether an honest Counsel ought to plead a dishonest Cause ; Cicero's Speech thereon, and the Result ; Jack Ketch's Petition to the Sheriffs ; Characters of Sworn Appraisers, and their villainous Usage of unfortunate Tradesmen ; The Lawyers being ordered into Cells apart against a new Day of Trial, all the Cells are visited, their Persons described, and their several Employ ; to which is added, Plain Truth, in three Dialogues, between Trueman, Skinall, Dryboots, three Attorneys, and Season, a Bencher'— Oh ! it's exceedingly clever, and *vaustly* amusing, I assure you !”

“ So I should think,” said Julia and Fanny,

in the same breath, and again obliged to have recourse to their pocket-handkerchiefs. Delightful and intellectual as the conversation had been, it was beginning to flag, when the door leading into the drawing-room opened, and Lord De Clifford advanced, and, after having announced to his mother that breakfast was ready, folding his arms, and turning to his wife, though scarcely looking at her, said, in an exhilarating tone of voice, "Well, my dear Julia, I hope you are better. Have you had your breakfast yet, or shall I send you in some?"

"O dear," said the dowager, rising, "it is time you and I, Miss Neville, should go, for I hate to interrupt matrimonial *tête-à-têtes*—I think it is so delightful to see them."

"*Cela depend*," replied Fanny; "there may be a *magic* about them sometimes, certainly; but when it degenerates into *legerdemain*, I cannot say I admire them," added she, looking indignantly at her brother-in-law.

"Why, d—n it," said he, taking out his watch, "it's half-past one; we'd better all go to breakfast, if we mean to have any to-day."

Lady de Clifford entreated them to do so, and was not sorry for the relief of being left to herself. Upon entering the breakfast-room,

they found Saville on the sofa, reading the last *Galignani*—Mr. Herbert Grimstone standing with his back to the fireless grate, looking at his painfully tight boots, more in sorrow than in anger—Mrs. Seymour was working a pair of slippers at one window, while Monsieur De Rivoli was at another, doing a caricature of Lord Charles Dinely, whom Herbert had invited to breakfast, and who was amusing himself by alternately entangling Mrs. Seymour's silks, and shying paper pellets into the gondolas as they passed under the window. Major Nonplus sat alone at a side-table, with a napkin tucked under his chin, and a dish as large as a boat before him of raw oysters, which he was devouring audibly. Reposing for one moment from his labours just as Fanny, Lord de Clifford, and the dowager entered, he exclaimed, with an ungratefully reproachful look at the *Xenophon's* trophy of empty shells before him—

“Ah,” as old Earle the miser used to say, “what capital things oysters would be, if one could but feed one's servants on the shells!”

“Very just observation,” responded the dowager.

“Alas! *nulla est sincera voluptas*, major,” sympathised Saville.

“Which means,” replied the latter, again returning to the charge, “no oyster without a shell, I suppose. After all, they are not so bad neither, for without them we’d have none of the sea water.”

“Ah oui, et apparemment vous avez la mer à boire là,” cried Monsieur de Rivoli, looking over from his sketch at the innumerable instalments of the Adriatic that the major was swallowing.

“Pray,” said Herbert to his own servant, as he brought in his diurnal mess of prepared cocoa, and one of his homœopathic powders, “is Monsieur Barhouiller, the French gentleman, up yet?”

“He’s been gone these two hours, sir,” replied the man.

“Gone ! and did he leave no message for me?”

“No, sir, only a book, which he said I was to give you.”

“O, that is all right,” said Herbert, brightening up ; and five minutes after, his beloved Timbuctoo was presented to him. He nearly pushed Mrs. Seymour’s plate into her lap in his eagerness to search within the ponderous volume for some note or other definitive opinion of the departed critic. But, alas ! none greeted

him—save, at the end of the volume, one small quotation from Martial :

“Comitetur punica librum

Spongia,

Non possunt multae una litura potest.”

“Stupid ass !” exclaimed he, closing the book, and banishing it to the back of his chair, as he resumed his attentions to a piece of dry toast.

“What’s the matter, my dear ?” inquired his tender mother.

“O nothing, my dear mamma ; only French people are either the cleverest or the silliest people in the world.”

“I say, old fellow,” cried Lord Charles Dinely from the other end of the table, enforcing the appeal by flinging a piece of roll at Herbert’s head, “let us see that petition, or whatever it is, that the man dressed as a sailor gave you last night at the ball, will you ?”

“O it’s up in my room—I don’t know where it is,” said Herbert, pensively running his fingers through his hair.

“Well, send for it, can’t you ?” said Lord Charles, ringing the bell, and himself giving the order when the servant came.

“I don’t know whether this is it or not, my lord,” said the man when he returned.

“ Here, let’s see what it is,” said the latter, snatching it off the salver, and then added with a horse-laugh as soon as he had looked at it, “ ’Pon my soul this is capital; hang me if I don’t vote for this when I get into Parliament, and I’ll make the governor do the same.”

“ What is it ?” unanimously asked the whole party.

“ Why, an address to both Houses of Parliament for the suppression of old women of both sexes !”

Every one laughed except the dowager, who began to lower, till the amiable Herbert gallantly took her hand, and said, with his blandest smile, “ I dare say, my dear mamma, it is very funny, and as there are no old women *here*, we may venture to read it.”

“ Come, read it, Herbert,” said Lord Charles, throwing it to him.

“ I can’t, I hate reading out—do you read it, Saville.”

“ With all my heart,” said he; and accordingly he read out what will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

AN ADDRESS TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,
FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF OLD WOMEN OF
BOTH SEXES.

“ Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda.”

HORAT.

“ Ut mala quem scabies aut morbus regius urget,
Aut fanaticus error, et iracunda Diana.”—IBID.

“ Old women, priests, and poultry, have never enough.”

ITALIAN PROVERB.

MY Lords and Gentlemen—Deeply impressed as I am with the difficulties of the proposition I am about to lay before you, yet a glow of *real* patriotism, equally uninspired by a public dinner, or prompted by the hope of a place in the legislature, impels me without fear (though I can scarcely venture to hope without reproach) to offer to your consideration a few cogent reasons why, in the present session, you should seriously turn your attention to the framing of a

Bill for the Suppression of Old Women of both Sexes. This is the *real corporate* reform of which the country stands in need, and until these most ancient, most respectable, but most detrimental corporations, are "*Schedule A'd*," the march of intellect is merely wearing out its shoes, performing the goose-step, and reform enacting the part of major-domo in the dusthole, cutting the air, and calling it a victory, as he removes harmless rubbish that is in nobody's way.

In the proposed bill, you, my Lords, can have possibly nothing to fear for the safety of *your* "*order*;" nor you, Gentlemen of the House of Commons, surely cannot suppose that, in any animadversions uttered against the antiquities of either sex, the cap can fit you—as I promise you faithfully it will not be a *mob-cap*.

The late William Cobbett, M.P. for Oldham, that political mosaic, than whom no individual ever had less of the old woman about him, inasmuch as that the idiosyncrasy of the latter genus is an adamantine adhesiveness to a particular principle or opinion; whereas it is a well-known fact that the late gridiron Solon scarcely ever broached the same opinions for two consecutive months. The late William Cobbett has, in his "*legacy to Peel*," asked the following questions:—

“ 1. What will you now do with the House of Commons ?

“ 2. What will you do with Ireland, and particularly with the church of Ireland ?

“ 3. What will you do with the church and the dissenters of England ?

“ 4. On the destructive effects of funds and of paper money in England, France, and America.

“ 5. What will you do with the tax-eaters called pensioners, sinecurists, grantees, retired allowance people, half-pay people, secret-service people, and the like ?

“ 6. What will you do with the crown lands, and with the army, and especially with regard to the punishments in the army ?”

These are all important questions, no doubt—very important questions ; but there is another still more important question, my lords and gentlemen, to be asked—ay, and to be answered too—

“ *What do you mean to do with the old women ?*”

And this query I take to be the very nucleus of all those just quoted from the illustrious defunct.

A young gentleman, of equal veracity and vacuity, not long ago miscarried of a pamphlet,

in which he tells you that "nothing can be done unless Whigs and Radicals alike see the imperative necessity of being united," never for a moment perceiving (owing to that moral obliquity for which he is so celebrated) how monstrous an issue might be the result of an union between such very near relations; but I tell you that nothing can be done till you see the imperative necessity of suppressing the old women of both sexes.

Before I search through the dim and shadowy light of past ages, amid the chaotic dust of buried empires, for the cause or causes of that supremacy and fiat-like sway which ancient ladies of both sexes seem to hold *jure divino*, or rather *jus civile*, over the affairs of this nether world, let it be clearly understood what I mean by the term "old woman." Never has it been, nor ever shall it be, employed by me in its vulgar and chronological sense; for there are quite as many octogenarian Ninons in mind as in person. The old women that should come within the pale of the Suppression Bill are like poets—they are born such—not made by any length of time whatever.

It is easy to perceive how the supremacy of the sisterhood has attained to its present colossal force, past ages having evidently awarded

to them that precedence which the present seems to deem it sacrilege to dispute. One of the earliest explorers of far countries—that respectable old lady Bushequius—mentions, that in Thebes a very rudely-carved female statue had been excavated, playing on an instrument much resembling a viol or modern violin, and bearing marks of almost antediluvian antiquity, which clearly proves that, so far back as before the flood, old women played first fiddle. Nor was heaven itself free from their jurisdiction; for an old Latin poet, in the reign of Tiberius, apostrophises the Sun in the feminine gender, imploring her to be merciful in exerting her great influence over the fate of man; so that, allowing the sun to be feminine, even at that stage of the world she must have been a tolerably old lady.

Of the pernicious influence of old women in general, and ancient ladies in particular, there are a thousand instances on record. Alcibiades disfigured the most beautiful dog in the world by cutting off his tail, in order to turn the tongues of the Athenian old women from his own defects to those of his dog. The first sycophants that ever existed were also to be found among the old women; for, by the ancient laws of Athens, the exportation of figs was rendered

criminal: the Attican figs being remarkably excellent, the Athenians did not choose that any foreigner should have the luxury of eating them. The prohibition was extremely ridiculous, but the Athenians were in earnest. Informers, therefore, were among them called "sycophants," from two Greek words signifying "fig," and "a discoverer."* And the very first informer was an old woman, who, in bleaching yarn on the sea-shore, detected one Glaucus, a fisherman, loading a vessel bound for Sicily with the forbidden fruit. From thenceforward this laudable office was chiefly monopolised by the Attican crones.

The Romans, on the contrary, though by no means despising Attic information, had, as it is well known, both a personal and political aversion for old women, always excepting Messala, the Roman senator, who married Terentia, (the widow of Cicero, Sallust, and half a dozen others,) in her extreme old age, merely for the sake of being talked about.

But by the Roman law we find different ages assigned for different purposes—as consular age, or that wherein a person might regularly hold the consulship, which was the forty-third year, so that he might sue for it in the forty-

* See Plutarch de Curiositate.

second—where it is to be observed, it was not necessary that either of those years should be expired, but only begun ; besides that, men of extraordinary merit towards the republic were, in this matter, exempt from ordinary laws : hence Corvinus was consul at twenty-three years of age, Scipio Æmilianus at thirty-six, and Pompey at thirty-five ; others broke through the laws by violence, as Caius Marius the younger, and Octavius Cæsar, who procured themselves to be made consuls before twenty years of age.

How different are all these wise juvenilities of the ancients to all our modern antiques, when no man is deemed fit for high office in the state till he has become superannuated, *alias* an old woman, with the brilliant exception of William Pitt, the ablest statesman that England ever produced, who swayed the helm of state at two-and-twenty—a perfect political infant ! And yet, my lords and gentlemen, the greatest enemy his memory and his measures have amongst you, I think, must acknowledge that there was no dentition of intellect apparent at any epoch of his career—nay, his bitterest opponent cannot but confess that he formed an Augustan era for England—for through him “all the world were taxed.”

But to return. Among the Romans even,

judiciary age, or that wherein a person was capable of sitting as judge, was not always the same; for, by the *lex servilis Glauciæ*, none were allowed to be chosen under fifty or above sixty, which is proof positive that sixty was the Rubicon that, once passed, left no escape from old womanism; whereas, with us, sixty is the *toga virilis* that alone fits a man for public life. But even sixty among the Romans was by some other laws set aside, and changed for, and limited to, that of thirty-five, but reduced afterwards by Augustus to thirty; though Pittacus supposes a mistake here in the text, and that, instead of thirty-five and thirty, it ought to read twenty-five and twenty. Aristotle fixed the military age at seventeen. (Polit., lib. viii.)

The age for holding offices in the city, as *quæstor*, *ædile*, *tribune* of the people, &c., is not determined by the annual laws of Villius, but appears to have been the twenty-seventh year. How different is this from the protracted gestation of civic honours in our degenerate days! Alas!—how often must a worthy alderman of the nineteenth century exert his powers of locomotion, and, like

“Sir William Curtis, late Lord Mayor,
Remove from this here house to that ere,”

before he can hope to attain to the civic chair! how many nightly vigils must he keep over cheese or china, over beer or bridles, over rubies or red herrings, before he can at the Mansion House

“Hush’d and satiate lay,
And chew in dreams the custard of the day!”

We have the experience of all past ages to prove how much the weal or woe of nations depends upon the capacity, integrity, and judgment of their rulers. But, from the undiminished (nay, increased) sway of the old ladies, this truth would seem to be totally disregarded.

Dinarchus, in his oration against Demosthenes, has the following passage.—“To what causes, Athenians, is the prosperity or calamity of a state to be ascribed? To none so eminently as to its ministers and its generals. Turn your eyes to the state of Thebes,—it subsisted once,—it was once great,—it had its soldiers and commanders. There was a time (our elder citizens declare it, and on that authority I speak,) when Pelopidas led the ‘sacred band;’ when Epaminondas and his colleagues commanded the army. Then did the Thebans gain the victory at Leuctra; then did they pierce into the territories of Lacedemon,

before deemed inaccessible; then did they achieve many and noble deeds. The Messenians they reinstated in their city, after a depression of four hundred years. To the Arcadians they gave freedom and independence; whilst the world viewed their illustrious conduct with applause.

“On the other hand,—at what time did they act ignobly, unworthy of their native magnanimity?—When Timolaus called himself Philip’s friend, and was corrupted by his gold; when the traitor Proxenus led the mercenary forces collected for the expedition to Amphissa;—when Theagenes, wretched and corrupt, like this man, was made commander of their band: then did these three men confound and utterly destroy the affairs of that state, and of all Greece. So indisputably true is it, that *leaders are the great cause of all the good and all the evil that can attend a community*. We see this in the instance of our own state. Reflect, and say at what time was this city great and eminent in Greece; worthy of our ancestors, and of their illustrious actions? When Conon (as our ancient citizens inform us) gained the naval victory of Cnidos;—when Iphicrates cut off the detachment of the Lacedemonians;—when Chalcias defeated the Spartan fleet at

Maxos;—when Timotheus triumphed at the sea-fight near Corcyra : — then, Athenians, then it was that the Lacedemonians, whose wise and faithful leaders, whose adherence to the *ancient institutions* had rendered them illustrious, were reduced so low as to appear before us like abject supplicants, and implore for mercy.

“ Our state, which they had subverted by means of those who then conducted our affairs, once more became the sovereign of Greece ; and no wonder, when the men now mentioned were our generals, and Archinus and Cephalus our ministers. For what is the great security of every state and nation ?—good generals and able ministers.”

Now observe, my lords and gentlemen, Dinarchus attributes all the former brilliant achievements and healthy tone of the Lacedemonian state, first to the wisdom and sound policy of its leaders, who were most assuredly both anti-ancient and anti-feminine ; and secondly, to an adherence to the ‘ *ancient institutions* ’ of the country. But mind, he does not say by an adherence to the *ancient ladies*. Pause, then, my lords and gentlemen, before you allow any old woman, or any set of old women, to urge you on into the total destruction of *all* the

‘ *ancient institutions*’ of your country. Municipal reform can never avail you, as long as *corporate reform* is still wanting; that is, as long as an influential old woman of either sex is allowed to remain extant.

I am well aware how many Timolausees there are among the Reformers, who, calling themselves Reform’s friend, allow themselves to be corrupted by Reform’s gold; for there *is* Reform gold, as well as Tory gold, though it must be acknowledged that the former much resembles the sovereigns that General Jackson has in that land of liberty, America, converted into eagles, inasmuch as the great alloy of republican dross it undergoes considerably lessens the sterling value of the legitimate coin.

All such *Timolausees* Reformers will of course be the very first to object to the Corporate, Ancient, Female Reform which I shall propose; and indeed it would be the height of ingratitude in them, did they *not* do so;—for it is as clear as noon-day that the first Reformer that ever existed was an old woman! But, in making this assertion, let it be understood that I do not mean the slightest personal allusion to my Lord Grey; heaven forbid! I have far too much respect for the order—*his* order I should say. No, I allude to a far more ancient and enter-

prising old lady, who, though anonymous, is not for that reason the less celebrated in the well-known nursery epic, beginning—

“ There was an old woman tossed up in a blanket
Seventy times as high as the moon ;
Where she was going I could not but ask her,
For in her hand she carried a Broom :
Old woman—old woman—old woman, said I,
Whither, ah whither up so high ?
To sweep the cobwebs off the sky,
And I'll be with you by-and-bye, by-and-bye.”

Now I beg leave to state, that after the most unwearied literary and antiquarian researches, I have discovered that the word *Broom*, at the close of the fourth stanza, is, in the black letter edition of the “Nursery Anthology,” spelt *Brougham*. It is also evident that cobwebs bear a typical allusion to the celestial poor laws ; but notwithstanding the old lady's very sweeping reform, it does not appear that the planetary parishes have ever reaped any advantages from it, especially Apheta,* who has been in a sextile position nearer the sun ever since : this can only be accounted for by a supposition that when this enterprising and apogæic old lady had gone up so high, like Astolpho, she went still farther, even to the moon, in search of her

* The name of the planet, which is the giver of life in a nativity.

reason, and having been much struck (*i. e.* moonstruck) with all she beheld, has remained there ever since, filtering her plans of reform through the reflected rays of the planet she now inhabits, and is still willing (with that philanthropy which first prompted so sublime an enterprise) to give a mouthful of moonshine to every hungry, needy, speculating, adventurous radical who shall invoke the spirit of Reform as embodied in her from whom it first emanated; come they in the trappings of pauper diplomacy, the Peachum craft of pickpocket patriotism, the foolscap uniform of radico-political pamphlets, or the beer and beefsteak gullibility of "Free and Independent Electors." (!) No matter; she has still moonshine enough for them all; and it is quite astonishing how long the latter can subsist upon this light but seemingly nutritive food. The Reform Bill itself, that grand panacea for all earthly ills, social, civil, and political, seems, by-the-bye, to have been framed upon the model of the magical Abracadabra of Sere-nus Samonicus, preceptor to the younger Gordian, as a charm or amulet for curing agues, and preventing other diseases. To have the effect, the word was to be written on paper and repeated, omitting each time the

last letter in the former, that the whole may form a kind of inverted cone, in this manner :—

Abracadabra
Abracadabr
Abracadab
Abracada
Abracad
Abraca
Abrac
Abra
Abr
Ab
A

So that it has this property, that which way soever the letters are taken, beginning from the apex, and ascending from the left to the right, they make the same word, or, as some would have it, the same sentiment, as is found in the first whole line. This paper must be suspended round the neck by a thread; but, according to Julius Africanus, another ancient writer, the pronouncing the word in the same manner will do just as well. Here then is the whole scheme of the Reform Bill! beginning with a mystical and high-sounding word, be-

coming gradually less as you examine it, and eventually terminating in schedule A. — the magical operation of the whole consisting in and depending on repeating the word in every possible way, and reiterating it on every possible occasion.

Nobody being more fully aware than I am, my lords and gentlemen, of the feline unkillability of old women of both sexes, I have never for a moment entertained the utopian vision of exterminating them. No, I merely propose to suppress them, and that in the following manner; that all male old women entertaining an overweening opinion of themselves be forthwith shipped off to Lilliput, in order that then and there they may find their own level, allowing them to travel by steam, that they may have the pleasure of vapouring to the last; that all female old women may in like manner be instantly transported to Brobdignag, in the hope of making them think a little less of themselves, which may perhaps be brought to bear by the time they have had their heads nearly gnawed off, like poor Gulliver, by half a dozen Brobdignag babies; but, with regard to this “consummation so devoutly to be wished,” nothing approximating to certainty can be surmised,

as they will be by far the most troublesome part of the cargo; we can only hope that they will not be like the old woman in the Irish song, who, after eloping with his Satanic majesty, was politely returned by him to her sposo, with this very ungallant assertion—

“What to do with her I cannot well tell,
For she’s not fit for heaven, and won’t stay in hell.”

I shall now proceed to give a catalogue *raisonné* of all the old ladies that should come under the Suppression Act; and as Lindley Murray asserts that “the masculine is worthier than the feminine,” the former shall take precedence. Imprimis—All prime ministers having passed the rubicon of sixty, figuring as the hero of a crim. con. All ministers for foreign affairs, adding protocols to embassies in the shape of young gentlemen who are never to be found at the seat of legation, but, after a three weeks’ residence in any foreign city, spawn a statistical work on the country, filled with errors, platitudes, and loose writing, and abounding in the *ludere cum sacris* of would-be witticisms—in short, an androgynal abortion, combining all the coarseness of the one sex with all the weakness of the other. All sur-

geons knowing no more of anatomy than was surmised by Aristotle. All physicians prescribing *eau medicinale* for the gout, or applying a stethoscope when called in to attend a complaint in the heart, which, from the throb of the patient's pulse, they ought to know was a love fever. All attorneys compromising their clients' interests by an amiable candour towards the opposite party, which could only be admirable and admissible in a young lady of fifteen. All umpires whose eyes are in their ears, and who consequently detect no more in a case than what they hear from an interested party. All staff officers, who, having arrived at "that uncertain thing which certain people call a certain age," conceive the whole duties of their situation to be fulfilled when they have effectually succeeded in representing a centaur by dovetailing themselves to their saddles, and parading through the streets from morning till night. All editors of liberal papers, who imagine (however republican the tone of their political articles may be) the community at large can believe either in the independence of their principles, or the uncompromising integrity of their opinions, when they turn to the evidently dining-out style and lord-and-lady-civility-inspired tone of their

reviews of certain books. All husbands who suppose that their wives, like Indian grass, will become the sweeter the more they are trampled upon. All fathers who are continually annoying and disobeying their sons, solely from their ignorance, in not knowing that twenty has more wants, and consequently requires more money, than sixty. All gentlemen who, after fifty, go a step beyond Narcissus, and, not content with being enamoured of themselves, fancy that every one else is so too. All electors, who continue to enact Shacabac to the Barmecide* feast of reform set before them at every succeeding election by their representatives. All men who anticipate their conjugal authority, like Alnaschar; but every one may not remember the story, so I will transcribe the part to which I allude, in the hope of preventing some worthy individuals from undertaking a voyage to Lilliput. Mark how the would-be husband soliloquises.

* Vide the Arabian Nights, where Schacabac goes to dine with the Barmecide, who keeps pressing him to eat the most delicious dishes, naming them one after the other, all the while not producing a single morsel of any sort of food, so that poor Schacabac is well nigh like to die of hunger—his appetite being duly whetted at the mention of so many good things.

“ When I am with my wife in the evening, I will sit on the upper hand. I will affect a grave air, without turning my head to one side or the other. I will speak little; and while my wife, as beautiful as the full moon, stands before me in all her ornaments, I will make as if I did not see her.

“ Her women about her will say to me, ‘ Our dear lord and master, here is your spouse, your humble servant, before you. She expects that you would caress her, and is very much mortified that you do not so much as vouchsafe to look upon her. She is wearied with standing so long; bid her sit down.’

“ I will give no answer to this discourse, which will increase their surprising grief; they will lay themselves at my feet; and after they have done so a considerable time, begging me to relent, I will at last lift up my head and give her a careless look; afterwards I will return to my former posture; then will they think that my wife is not well enough, nor handsome enough dressed, and they will carry her to her closet, and change her apparel. At the same time I will get up and put on a more magnificent suit than before. They will return and hold the same discourse with me as before; *and I will never have the pleasure not so much*

as to look upon my wife, till they have prayed and entreated so long as they did at first. Thus I will begin on the first day of my marriage to teach her what she is to expect during the rest of her life. * * * * *

“ She will certainly complain of my contempt of her, and of my pride, to her mother, the grand vizier’s wife, which will rejoice me at the heart. Her mother will come to wait upon me respectfully, kiss my hands, and say to me, ‘ Sir,’ (for she will not dare to call me son-in-law, for fear of provoking me by such a familiar style,) ‘ I pray you not to disdain my daughter. I assure you her chief business is to please you, and that she loves you with all her heart.’

“ But my mother-in-law had as good hold her peace. I will not answer her one word. * * * Upon which my mother-in-law will take a glass of wine, and putting it into the hand of her daughter, my wife, will say, ‘ Go, present him this glass of wine yourself; perhaps he will not be so cruel as to refuse it from so fair a hand.’

“ My wife will come with the glass, and stand trembling before me; and when she finds that I do not even look towards her, that I continue to disdain her, she will say to me with tears in her eyes, ‘ My heart, my dear soul,

my amiable lord ! I conjure you, by the favours heaven bestows upon you, to receive this glass of wine from the hand of your most humble servant !' But I will not look upon her still, nor answer her.

" ' My charming spouse,' she will say, redoubling her tears, and putting the glass to my mouth, ' I will never leave off till I prevail with you to drink.'

" Then, being fatigued with her entreaties, I will dart a terrible look at her, give her a good box on the cheek, and give her such a push with my foot, as will throw her quite off the alcove.

" My brother was so full of these chimerical visions, that he acted with his foot as if his wife had really been before him, and, by misfortune, he gave such a push at his basket of glasses, that they were thrown down and broken into a thousand pieces."—(Arabian Nights, page 115.)

Now, the absurdity of Alnaschar's conduct is obvious, inasmuch as that glasses are more frail even than wives ; and having, in reality, no wife to vent his just (!) indignation upon, he could not—(seeing that there are or were no hells in Bagdad—for there is no knowing how the march of

intellect may put even the Turks upon their *metal*)—he could not, I say, like Major Longbow, when his better half was reduced to a heap of ashes by a *coup de soleil*, ring the bell “with infinite promptitude,” and desire the servant to “bring clean glasses, and sweep his mistress away.”

Now, with regard to the female old ladies, I should say the following fully deserve to come within the Suppression Bill—namely:—All old women thinking it impossible that any one can possibly be a judge of their own affairs, and of what wholly and solely concerns themselves, thereby, upon all occasions, inundating their acquaintance with gratuitous advice. All old women complaining of the extravagance of the dress of young women of the present day, forgetting that the window-curtain-looking muslins of their day were far more expensive than the satin and velvet of the present. All old ladies cumbering their sons’ estates with fat jointures, and volunteering to accuse the aforesaid sons of folly or conceit, if they venture to make any improvements or alterations in their own house or lands, by the sapient assertion, “It was good enough for your father, therefore I think it might be good enough for you.” All old women who think that if, like

the ostrich, they hide their own heads, no one can see them — *alias*, that every one must believe the hollow professions of their words, however their actions may belie them. All old women who religiously believe that no man is good enough to be their daughter's husband, and no woman is within a thousand degrees good enough to be their son's wife, however brutal, profligate, or mediocre that son may be. All old women labouring under the mistake that age and wisdom are synonymous ; in short, all old women who think that none but themselves know how to live, because they have evidently forgotten how to die.

INDISCRIMINATES.

All old women, of either sex, detected in the act of reading Shenstone, or crying over the "Sorrows of Werter." All violent *laudatores temporis acti*, who must, consequently, neglect to read, with due attention, the History of England, or to remember the domestic annals of their own progenitors. All persons thinking that a child's parents must be its best friends, solely because they ought to be so.

But to particularise all the old women that ought to be suppressed, I should have to pluck

a quill from the wing of time, and write the list on the tablets of eternity ; therefore I have confined myself to pointing out a few of the most flagrant and urgent cases ; I do so without fear, being, I thank my stars,

“ Procul à Jove, procul à fulmine ;”

both my grandmothers being defunct these twenty years ; having no longer before my eyes the fear of Don or Proctor, consequently having no *fellow* feeling to “cow me into quietness ;” my wife being unequivocally young, as she still wants four months of three-and-twenty ; and, above all, I myself holding no office under the *present administration*. What then have I to fear from old women, collectively or individually ? Nothing.

With you, my lords and gentlemen, I am aware that it is otherwise. Upon the framing of such a Bill as I propose, no doubt all the suppressed will be ready to exclaim—

“ Such a display of municipal power
Has not been since Burdett was sent to the Tower.”*

But what of this ? It is not, my lords and gentlemen, that you love old women less, but that you love England more ! Let me then

* Vide the didactic poem of Punch and Judy.”

hope, as a *sincere* patriot, ready, for the good of my country, to take a Curtius leap into the gulf of all the old ladies in the united kingdoms, or, like Regulus, have my lidless eyes exposed to the meridian sun of the antique charms of all the old ladies of the female sex,—that your very first act on the re-meeting of Parliament will be the framing of the Old Woman Suppression Bill; and your petitioner will ever pray that Time may long suspend his *Habeas Corpus* Act with regard to your august persons.

PRODICUS.

“ Well, I’m sure,” said the dowager, when Saville had finished reading, “ it’s prodigious nonsense ; quite impossible to make out what it’s about.”

“ I wonder who on earth wrote it ! It’s devilish impertinent,” said Herbert—“ hang me if I don’t think there’s a cut at my pamphlet in it.”

“ The only fault I find with it,” interposed Mrs. Seymour, “ is its impracticability.”

“ Nil desperandum !” cried Saville, “ for now that we have a young Queen, it is to be hoped old women will get out of fashion, and in England that, you know, is almost synonymous with non-existence.”

“Vaustly rude, silly young man, my dear,” whispered the dowager to Herbert, and then added aloud, “be so good as to ring the bell.”

“By-the-bye,” said Fanny, “this is the day we fixed to go and see the dungeons of the Inquisition, and read the names of the poor wretches on the walls that Lord Byron spent two days in re-cutting; and if we mean to go, we had better do so at once, as it is nearly three now.”

“O hang the Inquisition,” cried Major Nonplus, pushing away the dish of empty oyster shells with a sigh, and leaning back in his chair, somewhat exhausted from his late indefatigable exertions; “though all the old rascally Inquisitors are now, thank heaven, dead and gone, yet I should be afraid to put my nose inside one of their infernal dens.”

“A groundless fear that, my dear sir,” said Saville, looking full at the major’s rubicund nose; “for even long before the abolition of the Inquisition they had done away with the torture by fire, therefore could have no motive for detaining *you*, did the institution still exist. Besides,” added he, pointing to the mountain of empty shells, “after having braved an ostracism with impunity, what other tribunal could you dread?”

“Come, come, Master Saville,” said Non-

plus, rising to leave the room, "I'll thank you to be more sparing in your jokes, for one's not always in the humour for them, do you see—and there's nothing so ruinous to the constitution as being agitated after eating. What's the meaning of understanding, sir?—why, digestion; of honour, sir?—digestion (of cold lead); of conscience, sir?—digestion; of patriotism?—digestion of foreign wines, calipash and calipee; of oratory, sir?—why, digestion of other men's speeches, however heavy they may be; of morality, sir?—why, digestion of legs of mutton at home, instead of discussing ortolans abroad. Have a care then, sir, how, through the levity of an ill-timed jest, you at once endanger a man's health, understanding, honour, patriotism, and morals."

"Hear! hear! hear!" cried Saville, as the major made his exit amid peals of laughter, and the rest of the party separated to get ready for the morning's excursion.

CHAPTER X.

“Why give you me this shame?
Think you I can a resolution fetch
From flowery tenderness: if I must die,
I will encounter darkness as a bride,
And hug it in my arms.”—SHAKESPEARE.

“Love is a superstition that doth fear
The idol which itself hath made.”
SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

“I only know we’ve loved in vain,
I only hear farewell—farewell!”—LORD BYRON.

What boots to me your jewell’d crown?—or even
The broad lands of your banner-blazon’d race?
They equal not the gem, now wrested from my heart,
Which in life’s treasury doth outweigh them all.

UNPUBLISHED PLAY.

A WEEK had elapsed since the occurrence of the incidents recorded in the last chapter, during which time Lady de Clifford had kept her room, not so much from indisposition as from a dread of meeting Mowbray, and a dis-

taste to meeting others. She was at once happier and more wretched than she had ever yet been—happier, in spite of all things, at being loved. O! none but those who have been repulsed, neglected, and ill-treated—who have had every tie and relationship that nature intended for a blessing converted by circumstances into a curse—can know or imagine the resuscitation of heart that follows, when the sunlight of affection has pierced the rigid springs of ice-bound indifference: every feeling seems to dissolve and merge into one; the heart flows calmly on to the murmuring music of its own thoughts; we are happy in the midst of misery; nay, we become of sudden value to ourselves, for are we not the idol of another? Our whole being is like the poet's beautiful description of summer—

“The chequered earth seems restless as a flood
Brushed by the winds. So sportive is the light,
Shot through the boughs, it dances as they dance,
Shadow and sunshine intermingling quick,
And darkening, and enlightening (as the leaves
Play wooing) every part.”

Again and again had Julia read Mowbray's letter, till she not only knew it by heart, but knew the identical place where every word was written, and the exact form of every letter; it

was her companion night and day, and was only removed from her eyes to be replaced in her bosom. Four days she had passed in this manner, and in repeating aloud in a sort of delirium, "Then he loves me!" To which the poor little starling that he had given her in the cathedral at Milan invariably answered, "*E vero vero*;" and from that moment she loved it better than ever. But soon came the waking to this dream. She read the letter for the last time, and dwelt more upon the sort of half prophecy contained in it about her child being taken from her, than on the words of love addressed to herself. A shudder came over her at the thought, but drawing herself calmly up, "No," said she, proudly, "they dare not do it; but—but if I have for a short time forgotten that I am his wife, Julia, I shall no longer forget that I am your mother. One burning spot glowed on her otherwise deathlike cheek, and her hand trembled slightly as she opened the little watch, and took from it the withered leaf of the water-lily Mowbray had given her at Como.

"I wish he had not seen you," said she, kissing it; "but as he did, you must go too." Here a violent flood of tears obliged her to replace the pen in the inkstand, which she had taken

up to write a few lines to Mowbray, in returning him his letter—for so she had resolved to do, as she felt she ought not to keep it. Exhausted with the conflict between love and duty, right and wrong, she sank back in the chair, and remained motionless for nearly an hour, when again rousing herself, she said calmly, “What must be must be, and the sooner it is over the better;” and not trusting herself to look again at Mowbray’s letter, she wrote as steadily as she was able with her left hand the following lines :

“Do not suppose that in returning your letter I do so in anger. No, it contains nothing to warrant any feeling of displeasure on my part, beyond, perhaps, the abstract circumstance of its being addressed to me—for which, after all I can only blame myself; on the contrary, your truth and candour deserve and demand a similar return from me—and they shall have it.

“Know then, weak and culpable as the confession may be, that my utter inability to destroy alone induces me to return it—keep it I dare not,—not because it would be imprudent, but because it would be sinful. Would that I could divest myself of all remembrance of you, as easily as I resign these outward tokens. But, alas! the very effort to forget, only

rivets afresh every link in the chain of memory—but all that rests with me to do, *shall be done*. The little leaf which betrayed to you the secret with which it had been entrusted, I now return; *do not destroy it*—to do so would be useless, for the inscription on it is but a copy, the original is engraven on my heart. I have not stooped to the subterfuge or affectation of denying what accident divulged to you, for I feel that with a nature so generous, so honourable as yours, to show you all the frailty and weakness of my heart is the best way, not only of securing your forbearance, but of obtaining your protection and assistance against myself.

“You talk of remaining with us during the rest of our journey, of being of use, of being a defence to me. Alas! this would be cruel kindness, and ‘false reasoning all.’ Now that the veil has been rent from our hearts, and the film has fallen from our eyes, what would become of our firmest resolve? How would all our struggles end, were we eternally in each other’s society. Of what avail would it be to pray with our lips not to be led into temptation, if we allow our free will to spur us into it on all occasions? No, no, it cannot,

must not be—we must part, and that immediately. After what I have written to you, how could I speak to you? Paper does not blush—does not tremble—does not feel. Mowbray, spare all that does; tears that cannot efface guilt would not satisfy love, and they are all I could give you. Your friendship I accept and reciprocate with my whole heart. Before you is a brilliant and honourable career. The Japanese have a tradition, that birds of paradise are transmigrated doves that have died for love; and though their mates never see them again in their transformed state, yet when they hear their note in the sky, it inspires the deserted dove with such intense delight as to make it unable to cease flying in circles through the air for several hours. So it will be with me; I may never see you again, but as your name soars, my spirit will hover round its fame with the only delight it is now capable of knowing. And now, farewell! I do not ask you to burn this, I only wish that you would. That God may ever bless you, will be the constant prayer of your sincere friend,

“JULIA.”

It was not till three days after Lady de Clif-

ford had written the foregoing letter that she had courage to send it: she felt that though she did not see him, Mowbray was still under the same roof, and that the moment he got that letter, it would be the knell for his departure; but Fanny having that morning returned "*Picciola*," which she had lent her, Julia had no longer any excuse for detaining it; so accordingly she enclosed her own and Mowbray's letter within its leaves, and sent it back to him.

O what a type of death is it to do anything for the *last* time, especially when the act includes a surrender of all that has constituted our "*life of life!*" For some hours after Julia had sent back Mowbray's letter, she appeared in a sort of stupor—she could not be said to be thinking even of him, for scarce

“ Beat that bosom where his image dwelt
So full, that feeling seem'd almost unfelt.”

Her head was leaning languidly on the arm of the sofa, and her hand hanging listlessly at her side, when Fanny entered. “Do, love, try and get into the drawing-room to-day?” said she, kissing her sister's cold pale forehead.

“I really feel unable,” said Julia, “for I cannot dress.”

“There is no reason why you should dress, dear, for there is no one there, and you never, to my taste, look so well as in one of those very *peignoirs* which you have now on. I think cambric and Mecklin lace so exceedingly becoming—it gives such a delicacy to the complexion;—to be sure your cap is a little crushed, so I’ll ring for Berryl to get you that pretty *ambassadrice* of old point and pink ribbons, in which I really think Oberon himself might fall in love with you.”

Fanny rang accordingly, and Berryl answered the summons, apparently much excited, and big with some important intelligence.

“Get that pretty *ambassadrice* of Julia’s first, Berryl, that I am so fond of,” said Fanny, “and then for heaven’s sake tell us what is the matter. Has the larch foundation of Venice given way? and are we now all floating on the sea? or, more wonderful still, has Lord de Clifford’s mother given you a new silk dress? for something miraculous must have happened, by your face.”

“*Hi’m* sure, ma’am,” said Berryl, settling the trimming of the cap, and holding it ever and anon at a little distance from her to judge of the effect—“*hi’m* sure, ma’am, you and

hevery one that knows him must feel glad of it ; he's a real gentleman, and will do credit to the name."

"Glad of what? do credit to what name?" interrupted Fanny.

"Why, ma'am, I was a going to tell you. About an hour ago, a government courier arrived in great haste, asking for the Marquis of Cheveley ; the hotel people told him that there was no nobleman here of that name ; but Mr. Mowbray's valet coming in at the time, the courier soon made him *hunderstand* that the *hold* Marquis was dead, and that his master was now Marquis of Cheveley. The courier said he had *halso* got a letter for him from the prime minister ; which he wrote in a great hurry, as the carriage was waiting to take him *home* to Windsor, in time for dinner ; well, of course, my lady, all we servants was anxious to know how Mr. Mowbray—I mean the Marquis—received his new honours. So we waited till Mr. Sanford came down from taking up the letters the courier had brought ; but would you believe it, ma'am," continued Berryl, turning to Fanny, who was by far her most attentive listener, "he found him with his elbows leaning on the table, and his face buried in his

hands, in a sort of stupor like ; and although Mr. Sanford called him my lord, and told him that a government courier had brought the letters, he took no notice but to point to the table and say, ‘Leave them there.’ Now, really, poor dear gentleman — nobleman I mean,” said Berryl, correcting herself, in which she was right, for they are not always synonymous—“I do not think he can be quite right, for he has looked dreadful *hill* this last week to be sure, and I really think he should have medical *hadvice*, ’specially now he’s a Marquis. La, what a fuss, to be sure, Mr. Herbert Grimstone does make about the little miserable bit of health that he has left, for *hif* his little finger only aches, all the doctors in the place are immediately sent for ; and I’m sure such a fine, handsome, generous nobleman as the Marquis of Cheveley’s health is of much more consequence than his.”

“Very just observation,” laughed Fanny, who never could resist a joke, especially against the Grimstones. “And, now Berryl, have the goodness to tell Luton to mix some Brussels lace with the blue rosettes on that new Indian muslin dress of mine, as I shall wear it at dinner.”

“Very well, ma’am,” replied Berryl, as she folded a white cashmere shawl round Lady de Clifford, who mechanically assisted in the operation, trembling more from agitation than cold.

“Dear me,” said Berryl, giving a parting stroke to the shawl, “this reminds me of his lordship’s—I mean the Marquis’s—generosity; for his lordship—at least Lord de Clifford—never gave me as much as a pin’s point, though I’m sure I’ve *valeted* him *oftener* than his own *valleys*—but that’s neither here nor there—but the Marquis says to me the other day—now, in the most *gentlemanest-like* manner possible—now, quite as if I had been a lady—‘Mrs. Berryl,’ says he, ‘I’m afraid you find it cold of nights sitting up with Lady de Clifford.’ O dear no, sir! says I, (for he was only plain sir, you know, then, ma’am,) for anything I can do for my lady *his* a pleasure. ‘That I’m sure it must be,’ says he in the *purliest* manner possible; ‘but still, Mrs. Berryl, fearing you may take cold, I must beg your acceptance of this shawl; and with that he gave me the most *beautifullest* green cashmere you ever see in your life, ma’am—much *fitter* for a princess than a servant; indeed my lady ad-

mired it so much, that she took it, and gave me her scarlet one instead of it."

There is no knowing how long Berryl might have expatiated on the new Marquis's good qualities, had not Lady de Clifford crimsoned at the allusion, before her quick-sighted sister, to her weakness, in making an exchange with her maid in order to possess herself of Mowbray's gift.

Berryl, perceiving the sudden flush in her mistress's face, exclaimed, "Dear me, my lady, how weak you are still! let me give you a little camphor julap, or you will never be able to get into the drawing-room."

Julia took the proffered restorative, and then, leaning on her sister's arm, walked slowly and feebly into the next room. It was a relief to her to find it empty. Fanny placed her on the sofa, saying, she should go for her work, and return immediately.

"So, then," said Lady de Clifford, as soon as she was alone, "Lord Cheveley is dead. *He* will now want no excuse to go; it is fortunate—very fortunate, very;" and she burst into a paroxysm of tears, and buried her face in her handkerchief. The door opened, and a foot-step advanced softly. If Julia thought at all,

she thought it was Fanny ; and, without uncovering her face, she put out her hand and said, " Do let me go back ; I am too ill, love, to stop here."

Instead of the gentle remonstrance or acquiescence that she expected, she felt her waist encircled, and a thousand burning kisses imprinted on her forehead. She started up, and perceiving Lord Cheveley, gave a faint scream, and sank again upon the sofa.

" Julia," said he, flinging himself passionately at her feet, and seizing her hand, " we have no time for anger, nor even for accusation or defence. To-morrow, before this time, I shall have left you—to borrow your own words—perhaps *for ever* ! And will you, can you anticipate that doomed hour by spurning me from you now ? Am I not punished—have I not suffered enough ? This last wretched, wretched week, I have begun my impossible lesson of trying to live without you. You think the death too slow a one, and you would kindly hasten it. Be it so then. The few remaining hours that intervene between our eternal separation shall not be made tedious to you by my presence."

He rose as he spoke, and moved one step

towards the door. Julia saw, heard, felt nothing but that he was going—going in sorrow, if not in anger. Duty, pride—*womanly* pride, all gave way, and grasping his arm convulsively with one hand as her other arm encircled his neck, and her head sank upon his shoulder, she sobbed out, “Pity—hate—despise; but do not, do not leave me *now*.”

“O blessed, blessed words!” said he, raising her head, and for the first time pressing his lips to hers; but they were as cold as ice, for she had fainted. He laid her gently on the sofa. “Wretch that I am!” exclaimed he, as he untied the strings of her cap, and parted the hair on her polished brow,—“thus eternally to sacrifice her to my selfishness. But to-morrow—yes, to-morrow, the struggle will be ended. She will be at peace; and no matter what becomes of me. Sweet soul! wert thou indeed fled, who could, who dare keep that loved form from me? And all cold and lifeless though it might be, yet would I not exchange it for all the living loveliness earth could produce.”

His ravings were here interrupted by Fanny’s return.

Lord Cheveley rose precipitately from the side of the couch where he had been kneeling,

and arranging his hair so as to hide his face in some degree, stammered out,

“Dear Miss Neville, I fear Lady de Clifford must have been more ill than we had any idea of, from her extreme weakness ; in rising to—to speak to me just now, she fainted.”

“She *has* been *very* ill ; but *you* also look ill and agitated,” replied Fanny, with a penetrating glance.

“O, only a few natural tears at my poor uncle’s death,” said he, colouring.

“True ; that reminds me that I have not yet congratulated *Lord Cheveley* ;” and Fanny put out her hand, upon which the young Marquis imprinted a kiss.

“Dear Julia,” said Fanny, rubbing her sister’s temples with eau-de-cologne, “she is, indeed, terribly weak. I’m sorry I persuaded her to come in here.”

“After the first exertion, I should rather say that it would be of use to her,” remarked Lord Cheveley, who did not like to acquiesce in anything likely to lead to Julia’s again leaving the room.

“Perhaps so,” returned Fanny, “for she is now beginning to revive. Have the goodness to open the window ; she will be the better for the air.”

When Julia came to herself, she was for some minutes unconscious of what had happened, or even of where she was, till, seeing Fanny and Lord Cheveley bending over her, the sudden recollection of all that had taken place previous to her sister's return suffused her face with crimson. She made an effort to rise, which Cheveley perceiving, and fearing that if she once left the room she would not return while he remained, he gently took her hand, and said, with as unconcerned a manner as he could assume, "Dear Lady de Clifford, you have no idea how I reproach myself for being the cause of your so far exerting yourself as to rise just now. I would have taken all your congratulations and good wishes for granted, I assure you. I was just going," continued he, smiling, "to show you a letter I got from Melford; I think it will amuse you. Certainly the Jesuits never tried harder for proselytes than the Whigs do; though it must be confessed they have not the art of retaining them when made, owing, perhaps, to their Roman magnanimity in courting their enemies and neglecting their friends."

Julia took the proffered letter with a trembling hand, and without daring to raise her

eyes: enclosed in it was a slip of paper, on which were written the following lines:—

“ Who could bear that fond letters so sacred as thine
Should encounter the gaze of the worldly, the cold ?
No! the flame hath consumed every heart-prompted line,
And those records of love I no more shall behold.

“ Each phrase well remembered I witness’d effaced ;
Thy loved name by my lips press’d again and again ;
O ! no more let thy feelings’ expression be traced,
For ’twas death to destroy what I dare not retain.”

When she had read them she did raise her eyes, and cast one look at Lord Cheveley full of gratitude and esteem, as she placed the lines in her bosom, and handed the premier’s letter over to Fanny, begging she would read it out, as she could not very well decipher the hand. Lord Melford’s letter was dated Downing-street, and private: it ran as follows:—

“ MY DEAR MARQUIS,

“ In being the first to congratulate you upon your accession to a title, which, distinguished as it has already been, will, I feel, derive additional

lustre from its present possessor, may I venture to hope, that with the other honours of my late noble friend, the mantle of his political principles may also have descended to you. In this wish I am graciously joined by the highest personage in the realm.

“ Lord Denham returned from Russia immediately after the death of the king; his object is nearer home. Great changes have taken place in the colonies; the governor-generalship is not yet disposed of. I have no hesitation in saying that the next vacant garter will accompany the office; but as I hope soon to see you, these matters are best discussed personally, especially as the courier only waits for this letter to start, which barely gives me time to assure you, my dear Marquis, that I am ever

Faithfully yours,

“ MELFORD.”

“ Which being interpreted,” said Fanny, “ means, that if you will, like a good boy, go out to Canada, or do anything else they please, it shall have a pretty blue ribbon, so it shall.”

“ No, no,” said Cheveley, smiling, “ I rather think they have got a troublesome customer in Denham, and it would be as well to have me as

a cat's-paw, to pretend that I have been promised whatever he wants,—no matter what; but I am very certain Canada is not farther from England than it is from his wishes, nor is Halifax. So near it," added he, laughing, "that they should imagine there was so much of the captain bold about me, as that I should favour them with the pleasing variation of hanging myself in their garters; however, as I see that precious document is marked private, I must beg of you not to mention the contents to anybody."

"Now, pray where can you have lived ever since your *entrée* into this best of all possible worlds," said Fanny, "to ask or expect that women should keep a secret?"

"In the world," replied he, "where I have invariably found that they are the only people who can."

"Well," said Fanny, laughing, "I have long intended working you a waistcoat, and now I'll delay it no longer, for that very just observation of yours: it shall be full of little secret, unfindoutable, mysterious pockets, against the time when you join the Whigs, and turn diplomatist."

"Well, who knows," said Lord Cheveley,

smiling, "*tutte le gran facende si fanno di poco cosa!* but I hope your waistcoat will never be worn by a turncoat.

Here the door opened suddenly, and Herbert Grimstone, without apparently noticing that Lady de Clifford and Fanny were in the room, rushed up to Lord Cheveley, and nearly wringing his hand off, breathlessly exclaimed—

"'Pon my soul, my dear fellow, I congratulate you with all my heart. I hear you've a letter from Melford. Has he offered you anything? What does he say—eh?"

"Not much," replied Lord Cheveley, coldly; "at all events the letter is private, and chiefly on the subject of my uncle's death."

"Oh—ah—yes—certainly—anything about Denham in it?" probed Herbert.

"Only that he has returned from Russia, and is now in England; but I fear we are making poor Lady de Clifford's head ache," added Lord Cheveley, turning haughtily away from his selfish interrogator, who had been standing with his hat on, his arms folded, and his back to Julia, whom he had not yet condescended to notice.

By-the-bye, the Lyoneses always wear their hats when they are going to be hanged. Who

knows but there may be something infectious in the custom?

"I beg you a thousand pardons, my dear Julia," said he, turning suddenly round, "I cannot tell you how anxious I have been about you, nor the delight it gives me," added he, kissing her hand, "to see you perfectly recovered from your accident."

And then, without waiting for any reply to so much affectionate solicitude, he again turned round to Lord Cheveley, and for a moment raising his hat, to run his fingers through his hair, said—

"So, Denham is actually returned, is he? When do you go to England, my dear fellow?"

"To-morrow."

"To-morrow!" reiterated Herbert; "by Jove, I've a great mind to go with you."

"I never travel with any man but Saville," said Lord Cheveley, repulsively, "for they bore me to death."

"Civil!" thought Herbert, as he left the room in quest of his brother, to tell him that he thought Mowbray had become deucedly pompous and impertinent since he had grown into a marquis, and to inform him of Lord

Denham's arrival from the north, and his opinion of the expediency of his and his brother's immediate return to England, to see what was to be done, or, in other words, what was to be got: but Lord de Clifford said he could not possibly return to England without first going on to Naples, as Captain Datchet was to meet them there at the end of the month; and Herbert, recollecting that he was also *chargé d'affaires* from the chest of Miss Mac Screw, was fain to agree to the measure.

That day poor Julia had to endure the successive congratulations of the whole party upon her recovery from her *accident*, and to consent to remain in the drawing-room, as dinner had been ordered there on her account.

Lord Cheveley had also to endure the individual and combined congratulations of everybody, and to engage, *nolens volens*, in alternate political discussions with Lord de Clifford and Herbert, who could not understand a man's being so apparently insensible and apathetic under the yet infant acquisition of a marquise, two hundred thousand a year, immense political influence, and doubtless the choice of the highest offices in the state.

"But surely, my dear fellow," said Herbert, with his mouth full of *chartereuse*, and a half-

sipped glass of barley-water in his hand, "in the position you now stand, you will not think of continuing a Tory?"

"And why not?" replied Cheveley; "if, when I might have wanted something, my principles were not to be swayed or shaken by self-interest, it is not likely that, now I can possibly want nothing, I should voluntarily relinquish them."

"No, I don't mean exactly upon the score of self-interest," shrugged Herbert; "but you see it's quite impossible that the Tories can ever rally as a party, or that England can ever again be governed on Tory principles."

"Very likely not by a faction bearing that worn-out name; but the time must come, and that shortly, when the country will rebel against being governed by no principles at all, which is at present the case."

"You forget, my dear Cheveley," said Saville, in his own peculiarly dry manner, "that the Whigs can always take refuge in their philosophy, which is about the soundest in the world, being that of Confucius; and you know one of his maxims is, that 'a man ought to change often, if he would be constant to wisdom;' and another, that 'in the state wherein we are, perseverance in well-doing consists not

so much in not falling, as to rise again as often as we fall ;' and nobody can deny the dexterity which the Whigs have evinced in this particular of late."

"Jesting apart, my dear Saville," replied Cheveley, "the first maxim contains the quintessence of truth ; for which reason, no really honest politician (always supposing there be such a thing) can be a party man ; for inasmuch as no set of men are infallible, neither can their measures be so ; consequently, whoever unconditionally pledges himself to a party, must pledge himself to voting, nine times out of ten, against his conscience."

"Well, but you will allow," interposed Herbert, "that there never was an administration so completely popular—that is, which so entirely studied the rights and privileges of the people."

"I allow no such thing," said Lord Cheveley ; "for I do not think they by any means act up to the *soi-disant* principles that brought them into office :—*imprimis*, in my estimate of the people, I include the inhabitants of the sister kingdom ; and how their interests have been cared for, the conduct of the Whig government upon the Irish appropriation clause, during Sir Robert Peel's administration, and their subse-

quent measures upon that same clause, under their own auspices, during the last session, will best testify. True, ever since the Union, Ireland has been treated as the wife of England; and, consequently, is expected to endure, without murmur, struggle, or retaliation, whatever insults, injuries, and oppressions her manly and patriotic spouse, Mr. John Bull, may choose to inflict upon her, while he passes for a very fine fellow in the world, as long as he rants about his own and his brother-man's liberties in England."

"Which liberties," said Saville, "appear to me to be poised on the same basis as the Harrow boys' right to Mr. Newcome's fruit."

"And what might that be?" asked Lord de Clifford, sneeringly.

"Why," replied Saville, "poor Newcome's garden adjoined the school-house at Harrow: the consequence was, that it was stripped of its fruit even before it was ripe; whereupon, tired of applying to the masters for redress to no purpose, he at length appealed to the boys; and sending for the head of the sixth form to his house, he said to him, 'Now, my good fellow, I'll make an agreement with you and your companions—let my fruit remain on the trees till it becomes ripe, and I promise to give you half.'

The boy, assuming an ambassadorial dignity of deliberation, coolly replied, ‘ I can say nothing to the proposition myself, sir, but I will make it known to the rest of the boys, and inform you of their decision to-morrow.’ Well, to-morrow came, and with it this reply, ‘ The gentlemen of Harrow cannot agree to receive so unequal a share, since Mr. Newcome is an individual, and they are many.’ Now I leave you, my good friends,” concluded Saville, “ to draw a corollary between the numerous gentlemen of the people and the individual gentleman or lady upon the throne.”

“ Oh ! if you did but know, or could but imagine,” said Fanny, yawning, “ how sick I am of those eternal politics, you would have mercy on me, and talk sense, pay compliments, or quote poetry.”

“ Well,” said Saville, laughing, “ I will try to obey you ; but to talk sense when a pretty woman is at one’s side is not so easy ; and as to paying compliments, with you for their object, they would never end ; and then for poetry ; — but yes, as this dinner is not served *à la Russe*, with the fruit on the table, I think old Herrick can help me to a stanza—to you, sweet ladies all, I say—

‘ Ye may simper, blush, and smile,
And perfume the air awhile;’

and to the confectionary,” continued he, bowing to the table, “ I can only add—

‘ But, *sweet* things. you must be gone,
Fruit you know is coming on.’ ”

“ And so is something better, too,” said Cheveley, kissing little Julia, who had just come into the room and clambered on his knee, as was her wont.

“ Do you know what they told me,” said the child, throwing her little arms round his neck; but I didn’t believe it, and now I see I was right. There, stoop down your pretty little ear, and I’ll tell you. Well, they told me you were not Mr. Mowbray any more—my own dear kind Augustus Mowbray; but that you were Lord Cheveley, or Lord Something; and Mademoiselle d’Antoville said, I was not to climb up upon your knee and tease you; but that I was to make you a low curtsy, and say, ‘ Monsieur le Marquis, je vous en félicite de tout mon cœur ;’ ” and here the little thing pursed up her mouth, raised her eyebrows, and lowered her eyelids, in imitation of her governess, which set every one laughing but her father, who said—

“ I’m sure Mademoiselle d’Antoville would tell you not to be so loud and so rude, if she were here, Julia.”

“ Yes, papa, but thank goodness she is not here ; so, Monsieur le Marquis, je vous en félicite de tout mon cœur,” laughed the child, mimicking Mademoiselle d’Antoville more accurately than before, and burying her face on Lord Cheveley’s shoulder in a peal of laughter, in which every one joined except her sire, who cried out in an angry voice—

“ Come, come, Julia, if you don’t know how to behave yourself, you had better go to bed.”

From this she knew there was no appeal, and the poor little thing was preparing reluctantly to obey, when Lord Cheveley interposed.

“ Nay,” said he, “ as I go to-morrow, I must request, as an especial favour, that I and my little friend here are not separated so soon.”

“ Go to-morrow !” said the child ; “ where are you going ?”

“ To England,” replied he, with a sigh.

“ O, then, we are all going,” cried the little girl, clapping her hands ; “ I’m so glad !”

“ No, not all—only me,” replied Cheveley.

The poor child’s joy was now turned to sorrow, and she sobbed audibly as she said,

“ And is Prince going too—poor Prince ?”

“ Yes, you know I could as soon leave my heart behind as leave Prince.”

“ Then do leave your heart behind—make him leave his heart and Prince with us, mamma?” said the child, innocently turning to the sofa where her mother was lying.

“ Come here, Julia,” said Lady de Clifford, “ you are teasing Lord Cheveley;” and she hid her own blushing face against her child’s, as she stooped down and whispered to her to be quiet, or her papa would send her to bed.

“ It is time for you to call her to order, I think,” said Lord de Clifford, as he rose from table, and offered his arm to his mother, when they left the room together.

When the dessert was taken away and the table removed, Saville begged for some music. While he, Fanny, and Mrs. Seymour were turning over the contents of the music-stand, Major Nonplus buttoned up his coat, and fussing up to Lord Cheveley, who had drawn his chair beside Lady de Clifford’s sofa, began apologising for, and regretting, an indispensable engagement that called him away. It was really provoking that upon the last evening of his lordship’s being in their circle, and the first of her ladyship’s being able again to join it, he should be compelled to absent himself; but,” added he,

“ I assure you, you cannot regret it so much as I do.”

“ That I am convinced of,” said Lord Cheveley, smiling as he shook hands and wished him good-bye.

After the major’s departure, and the laugh that followed it had subsided, an embarrassing silence ensued, which Cheveley broke by saying to Fanny,

“ Do, Miss Neville, have the goodness to sing that beautiful duet of Millar’s, ‘ Loved friend, awake thy song.’ ”

“ With pleasure,” replied Fanny ; “ how very beautiful some of his music is !—it is so perfectly adapted to the words.”

“ So it is,” said Cheveley ; “ I am a great admirer of his compositions ; but did you ever hear his wife sing ? ”

“ No,” said Fanny ; “ does she sing well ? ”

“ *Well* is not the word. She has about the most exquisite voice I ever heard ; it is so soft, so silvery, so clear. Her upper notes always give me the idea of a waterfall trinkling through sunbeams. And then she is so delicately and gracefully pretty, that one’s eyes are almost as much feasted as one’s ears. One of the greatest musical feasts I ever had, was hear-

ing her and her sister, Mrs. Bishop, sing together."

"Dear me, you quite make me envy you," said Fanny.

"Well, will you, in revenge, let *me* envy *you* by hearing you sing?" asked Cheveley.

And accordingly Fanny, and Saville, who had a deep, rich, mellow voice, sang the beautiful duet that Lord Cheveley had asked for. When they came to the last verse,

. . . . "When in days long past,
I listened to thy song, too beautiful to last,"

Cheveley involuntarily raised his eyes to Lady de Clifford's, and mechanically repeated the words, "*too beautiful to last.*"

The exquisite harmony of the last cadence had died away some minutes before he was sufficiently collected to ask them to sing something else;—with which they good-humouredly complied, by singing that sweet thing from one of Blangini's Notturmi,—"*Amor che nasce.*" Even had Julia and Lord Cheveley been alone, their hearts were too full to speak.

"Men shadow out the truth when they are sad.

They say but ill, who tell us that grief speaks

In household phrases."—BARRY CORNWALL.

But it was not then, while they were filling their hearts with last looks of each other, that they felt all the agony of grief which fate had

prepared for them. Love is truly a child, to whom the present is all ;—who plays, and even sleeps, on the brink of a precipice ; and feels neither its danger nor its desolation, till it awakes and finds itself *alone* !—and that truth—faith—all save memory—has flown. Though neither Cheveley nor Julia could speak themselves, everything else seemed to speak for them : even Monsieur de Rivoli, who had taken up a guitar, and twanged people into asking him to sing, sang, with rather more feeling than usual, that charming little French romance, “ *On peut fuir sans oublier !* ” When he had finished, little Julia said to Lord Cheveley, “ Do let poor Prince come up, as it is the last evening to wish us good-bye ? ”

“ *On peut fuir sans oublier,* ” said he, abstractedly, parting the child’s hair.

“ Yes, I know,” replied she, “ that dogs never forget—but may he come up ? ”

“ Certainly,” said Cheveley, recollecting himself, and colouring as he rose to ring the bell.

The dog was ordered, and five minutes afterwards the poor animal came bounding into the room, and, as if aware that it was paying a farewell visit, it seemed to lavish its caresses doubly upon every one,—but especially upon Lady de Clifford, who had always been kind to it : it placed its paws upon her shoulders, and nestled

its cold nose into her neck. In stooping to return its caresses, a small Trichinopoly chain that she wore round her neck got entangled in the dog's collar, and the clasp giving way by the animal suddenly jumping on the ground, he remained in possession of the chain, which his master perceiving, disentangled, and dexterously concealed it; then stooping to pat Prince and calling him a good dog, he said, in a low voice, inaudible to every one but the one it was intended for, "Not a link is broken, nor ever shall be." But time, relentless time, who is fate's Mercury, knocks at every door, heedless whether the tidings he brings be life or death, weal or woe; and his iron tongue now tolled midnight. One after another the party had dropped off, till only Cheveley and Lady de Clifford, Fanny and Saville, remained. The two latter parted from their friend, loading him with a thousand good wishes; but neither he nor Julia spoke one word. He was to leave Venice at six in the morning: her door closed on him. Was it *for ever*?

Julia sat by her window the whole of that night. Morning at length dawned; it was dull and cold, accompanied by a deluge of rain. She felt grateful that the very clouds seemed to sympathise with her. Soon she heard the mur-

mur of voices on the landing beneath her windows. Sanford and Prince stood at the entrance of the gondola ; presently Lord Cheveley appeared—he looked pale and haggard ; he pulled his travelling cap over his eyes as he entered. The coffin-like boat, the gondola, pushed off, and Julia saw him *no more !*

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The noon of that day found Lady de Clifford in a high fever ; and it was a month before she was sufficiently recovered to allow the party to pursue their journey to Naples.

CHAPTER XI.

"Look you, Bill, some hanimals is more difficult to poison nor others, 'specially if they are wenomously hinclined, and fond of the world like."—RATCATCHER'S DIARY.

"We are all of us deceived at times, and those who do not know as much are the more deceived."—ZIMMERMAN.

"I have (though a tolerably good philosopher) but a low opinion of *Platonic* love. For which reason I thought it necessary to give my fair readers a caution against it; observing, to my great concern, the waist of a Platonist lately swell to a roundness that is inconsistent with that philosophy."

STEELE.

"A gentleman of a pacific temperament, but who had somehow or other managed to incur a kicking, excused it by very forcibly arguing that a 'man can no more help what is done behind his back than what he said.'"

BEAUTIFUL Naples! whose sapphire waves flow on in music, and whose flower-breathed air laughs out in sunshine, as though primeval Eden's youth still lingered on thy shores, mock-

ing at sin and time—beautiful Naples ! Venus of cities, rising from the sea, begirt with beauty like a zone, and diadem'd with palaces, shall I ever again behold you ? No, never !—at least as I beheld you once ; for to the winter of the heart no second spring succeeds.

The journey to Naples had been performed by slow and easy stages ; still Lady de Clifford was so weak, that they had been there a month before she felt equal to taking a drive.

Their apartments at the “ Victoria ” faced the Villa Reale, and the only progress she had made towards convalescence was having her chair wheeled to the window, and inhaling the air of its delicious gardens. There she would sit for hours, without enjoying or apparently noticing anything ; even the puppet-show, penny-trumpet sound of the signal for the half dozen odds and ends of men that composed the guard, to turn out when the king or queen passed, did not rouse her ; the only objects she seemed to distinguish from others, were when that gorgeous mockery of death, a Neapolitan funeral, passed under her window, and then she looked wistfully at the crimson velvet pall, and eagerly after the hideous masks that followed it : indeed she had become such a complete wreck, that the dowager had frequently taken occasion of late

to impress upon her son, that now his wife had taken to low spirits and ill health, it became doubly incumbent on him, as soon as he returned to England, to make arrangements for living *ong gorson*,—in other words, sending his wife quietly into the country to vegetate by herself: and soon everything was arranged to the complete satisfaction of both mother and son, even to the plausible excuse that was to be resorted to on the occasion, which was, that, with the expenses of an approaching election in view, he could not afford the *frais* of a London establishment, and, besides, the country was better for Julia's health and education.

O for a forty Tartuffe power to sing thy praise, hypocrisy! 'Time was, when this arrangement, as it would necessarily include the removal of Mademoiselle d'Antoville also, would not have been so easily acceded to on the part of Lord de Clifford; but, (must we confess it?) during the month he had been at Naples,—

“ A grenadier, as you shall hear,
A much fiercer, taller man,”

Count Campobello by name, had been more constant in his visits to Mademoiselle than Lord de Clifford thought consistent with her professed devotion to him; nay, one night at

the San Carlino, he could have almost sworn that he overheard the count call her "mia cara Laura;" but this *his* Laura positively denied; nay, she got quite indignant at the bare supposition of such a thing, cried, pouted, and whimpered a great deal about the hardship of not being able to see such a very old friend as Giovanni Campobello, without being so calumniated, and that too by the man she adored!

Nevertheless, the more Lord de Clifford was adored, the more he obstinately persisted in thinking that the count's visits were a great deal too frequent, and his face a great deal too young, and much too handsome for an *old* friend: in short, beginning to suspect that there was truth in the Chevalier de Parny's assertion,

" Que les sermens sont un mensonge,
Que l'amour trompe tôt ou tard,
Que l'innocence n'est qu'un art,
Et que le bonheur n'est qu'un songe,"

he had serious thoughts of becoming moral, and breaking off that *liaison*. Miles Datchet had been a week at Naples previous to Lord de Clifford's arrival. Herbert was profuse in thanks, as far as words went, for his success with Miss Mac Screw, though Major Nonplus put in his claim for some of them by then confessing

that he had written to Miss Mac Screw, and attributing her change of conduct entirely to the force and urgency of his appeal;—not that he meant to say that Datchet was not a monstrous clever fellow; he had had experience of it before now, for, when he knew him in the commissariat in Spain in 1823, he used to convert all the Empecinado's pigs into Bayonne hams in the most miraculous manner. The dowager, too, was well satisfied with Datchet, or rather with the letter he had brought her from Mr. Tymmons, stating that Hoskins was gradually taming, that Rushworth farm was draining and re-thatching, and consequently that Farmer Jenkins was silenced at last.

“ Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting in the king's gate,” was the feeling of Lord de Clifford when he heard that the Lees were unmanageable, and that the plot about Richard Brindal had utterly failed. It was too bad that he, who had been “ foaming a patriot ” all his life in the hope of “ subsiding a peer,” could not effectually crush or cajole that miserable family, so as to prevent the chance of their being troublesome to him at the next election. But doubtless he, with his mother's assistance, would be able to concoct some other plot for that

purpose before the time arrived. Datchet had also been the bearer of good tidings to Saville—no less than letters containing his father's consent to his marriage with Fanny. At any other time this would have occasioned unalloyed happiness, but now, in spite of it, Fanny appeared to have a gloom over her spirits for the first time in her life. The fact was, in her close attendance upon her sister during her late illness, she discovered the cause of it ; and though she had always deeply felt for Julia's unhappy lot, yet she thought, and thought rightly, that she had never been utterly and irremediably wretched till now. Of her principles she did not for a moment entertain a single doubt, but she saw that they would be preserved at the expense of her life. Saville's love and pride might both have been wounded by Fanny's depression of spirits at the time, when at length every obstacle to their union had been removed, had he not, from his own observation of the alteration that had taken place in Lord Cheveley before his departure from Venice, been led to suspect the position in which he and Lady de Clifford stood towards each other ; and although he had too much delicacy to hint at it to Fanny, yet it perfectly enabled him not only

to understand, but to sympathise in, her unwonted gloom.

Lady de Clifford was sitting one morning as usual at the window, a few days previous to their return to England, with Fanny in the room, affecting to draw, but in reality watching every change in her sister's face, when little Julia ran into the room; but checking herself at the sight of her mother's pale and suffering face, she walked gently up to her on tiptoe, and throwing her arms round her neck, said—"Dear mamma, I have never yet shown you the pretty bracelets Lord Cheveley left for me the day he went away—that nasty day—I hate it!"

And the child held up a pair of emerald and diamond bracelets, the design of which was a wreath of myrtle, the leaves done in emeralds, and the blossoms and buds in brilliants and rubies. Seeing her eyes fixed on the bracelets, and imagining the train of thought they were likely to awaken, Fanny threw down her pencil.

"Come, Julia," said she, "the day is so lovely, that I must insist upon your taking a drive. Here have we been for a whole month or more; in a few days we return to England, and yet you have not once gone to see your old favourite, the point that stretches out by Baja,

at the end of the Strada Nuova. I'll give up my ride to-day, and so, *cara*, you positively must drive with me."

So saying, Fanny rang the bell. "What sort of day is it out?" inquired she of the servant who answered it?"

"Very fine, ma'am."

"Any wind?"

"Not much, ma'am, and the little there is, is very warm."

"Very well, then, order the open carriage round directly, and tell Berryl to bring Lady de Clifford's bonnet and shawls here immediately, and Luton to bring mine."

"May I go, mamma?" said little Julia earnestly.

"I do not think I am able to go, love."

"When, when am I to take a drive with my own mamma again, then?" pouted the little girl, for I am so tired of walking in the Villa Reale, or driving alone on the Campo, with Mademoiselle d'Antoville; and then that horrid great tall Count Campobello always comes and teases me, and talks Neapolitan to me, that I cannot understand. *Do, do*, dear mamma, go out to-day, and take me with you."

What mother ever yet resisted the "*do, do*" of a child, when there was no harm in acceding

to it? So Lady de Clifford allowed Berryl to put on her things, and, leaning on Fanny while Julia took possession of her other hand, suffered them to lead her to the carriage.—Deep indeed must be the gloom which the balm and beauty of a Neapolitan day does not chase away; but it did not chase away Lady de Clifford's, for there is a prostration of strength that accompanies deep affliction, which, while it partially annihilates our corporeal nature, seems to give additional vitality to our minds, till it overwhelms us with a painful sense of our own identity, that destroys the influence of external objects.

“Which way would you rather go, dearest?” asked Fanny, “through Pausilipo and so on to Fuzaro, or on the Strada Nuova?”

“Whichever way you like, love,” replied Lady de Clifford, with a mournful smile, “for I am not such an epicure as the Neapolitan galley-slave, who at his execution called for a glass of water, and when it was brought to him reproached the priest with, *Padre, non è bevata.*”

At all events this speech was iced, for it struck a chill to poor Fanny's heart, from the reckless and desponding tone in which it was uttered. During the rest of the drive, all her efforts to arouse and amuse her sister were equally fruitless; and seeing that the air ap-

peared to exhaust rather than revive her, they returned home. Time, which robs, alone can restore, thought Fanny, as she silently and sorrowfully ascended the large dirty staircase at the Victoria, that led to her own room. But Fanny was wrong; Time may heal, but it *never restores*; for our finest feelings are like Venice glasses, which once destroyed can never be cemented, and the fragments are shunned by our best *friends* (?) as useless, if not dangerous.

* * * * *

The 6th of December, 18—, was an eventful night at Naples. Vesuvius poured forth its burning flood in mightier torrents than it had done for years. The dear good old Archbishop of Tarento's favourite black cat "Otello" died, and Mr. Herbert Grimstone, who (as we have before stated) was a homœopathist, had nearly killed himself by accidentally taking the poisonous viaticum, intended to be consumed in three months, at

. . . . "One fell swoop,
The why, the where, what boots it now to tell"

of how all this happened? — yet, surely, as a young gentleman who set such a value upon himself, though his life was by no means pro-

portioned to his *assurance*, must be of some value in the eyes of others, we will relate it.

Major Nonplus, that "head and front" of everybody's "offence," had deputed Mr. Wood to send him from Sicily three pipes of Marsala; but as in England Marsala is "of no account," he determined, though no conjuror, to convert it into sherry; and in order to give it a fine flavour of the Borraccha, he deposited half a pair of boots in each butt: when he deemed that it had acquired a twang that even a Spaniard would mistake for Xeres, he persuaded or rather over-persuaded Herbert in an evil hour to taste what he called some very fine sherry that he was taking over for his friend Lord Cramwell. Now, everybody knows that two of a trade can never agree, and the poison called wine is incompatible with that calling itself homœopathy. And although foxglove has attained a high place in medicine, and often has a hand in curing diseases, yet dogskin, especially when transformed into old boots, could not be expected, when interfering with the homœopathic system, to do anything but put its foot into it; consequently, shortly after Herbert had retired to rest he felt so exceedingly ill, that he darted out of bed, like a shot, in search of one of his powders, and, deceived by

the treacherous glimmer of the rushlight, he made the just recorded fatal mistake; but soon the violent ringing of his bell summoned first his servant, who in his turn brought a physician and a stomach-pump, and eventually his mother, brother, Saville, and Major Nonplus, to the rescue. Great was the shock his tender parent received on entering the room, at beholding what she thought her son's headless trunk standing perpendicularly against the wall; but it was only the clothes he had taken off, the shoulders, breast, arms, hips, and calves of which, being thoroughly well padded, became a practical noun substantive, and stood alone. On the mantelpiece appeared a sort of embryo apothecary's shop, so full was it of phials, pill-boxes, lint, plasters, and boxes of Seidlitz powders. A great many shawls lay upon the arm of the sofa, and in the centre of it was an air-cushion; the toilette still breathed more of the laboratory than the perfumer's, for stethoscopes and respirators, jostled eau mignonne and crème de sultane; but the chaos of the writing-table at once proclaimed the man of genius—here lay a glove-box despoiled of half its contents—there, two or three cambric pocket-handkerchiefs soaking up some ink, which, in the *vividavis animæ* of genius, had been

spilt; at one corner were the Allegories of Apuleius, and the Dialogues of Plato, buried under a ream of the "Westminster Review;" while at another was the "De Rerum Naturâ" of Lucretius, wedged in between "Locke on Civil Government" and "Reid on the Mind." The rest of the table was occupied with modern French novels and plays, especially that of "*Abel dans le Costume du Temps*:" but surmounting his invaluable work on "Timbuctoo" was a half-written pamphlet, with "Ne Hercules quidem adversus duos" for its motto, and the Greek word λαῶς, or "the people," to whom certainly the whole affair would be Greek, occurring in every fourth line; but, with that versatility which genius ever possesses, on the opposite page he had commenced a French madrigal, beginning—

"Belle et charmante Zelis, toi qui m'adores;"

but where was the genius of the place? sitting in a bergère, night-capped and dressing-gowned into a semblance of life, but still looking more like death in masquerade.

"God bless my soul," said Major Nonplus, in a disappointed voice, as if angry at having been got out of bed by a falsehood, "why, they told me you were dead!"

"So I am, very nearly," gasped Herbert.

“ My dear fellow, what have you done ? ” inquired his brother, bending over him.

“ For myself I’m afraid,” replied Herbert.

“ My dear, my dear, don’t talk so, pray,” said his mother ; and then turning to the English physician, who was counting his pulse, and looking at his watch, added, “ I need not, I’m sure, say, doctor, that if you recover him from this *here* dangerous attack, no *d’argent* shall be spared on my part.”

“ I am happy to tell your ladyship,” said the doctor, “ that I consider Mr. Grimstone now out of danger, and have no doubt that in a few days he will be as well as ever, and able to travel.”

“ Yes, my dear mamma, I feel a great deal better already ; but pray sit down, for you don’t look well. I wish you would try the homœopathic system.”

“ God bless me, my dear,” said the dowager, darting full three yards from her son, as if she had been galvanised, “ do you want to poison me too ? ”

“ Heaven forbid, my dearest mamma, for your will has ever been my study, and I should not wish you to do anything you did not like.”

“ Humph ! ” muttered the major, pulling

down little avalanches of his sugar-loaf mountain of a cotton nightcap over his ears — “many a true word said in jest—I don’t doubt but her *will* has always been your study.”

“I’m sure, doctor,” resumed her ladyship, “you will agree with me in the things I tell Herbert he ought to avoid and never eat—pepper, cucumbers, cold feet, thorough draughts, and the heat of the sun.”

How he was to eat cold feet, thorough draughts, and the heat of the sun, was not exactly plain to the doctor’s capacity; therefore was his politeness the greater in telling her ladyship that he perfectly agreed with her. Saville, who had been remarkably kind, and really anxious about Herbert during the first two hours that they were assembled in his room, could not, now that he was pronounced out of all danger, resist a smile at his rueful appearance.

“I fear,” said Herbert, languidly, “I never shall be fit for anything again.”

“O don’t despair,” replied Saville; “you’ll make a very good outline of an ambassador yet.”

“I don’t quite understand what you mean by that,” said Herbert.

“Why,” resumed Saville, smiling, “I was thinking of the old story of the Duc de Choiseul, who was so remarkably thin, that when he came to London to negotiate a peace, Charles Townshend, on being asked whether the French government had sent the preliminaries of a treaty, answered he did not know—but they had sent the *outline* of an ambassador.”

“My feet are so dreadfully cold,” said Herbert, not liking to join in a laugh against himself, “that I should like to have a carriage muff.”

Lord de Clifford, remembering that there were generally two or three in Mademoiselle d’Antoville’s room, volunteered to go for one. Although it was now past three in the morning, he entered that lady’s sanctum without the ceremony of knocking, naturally supposing that she had been in bed hours before, dreaming of him : what, then, was his surprise, upon opening the door, to find the candles lighted on the table, and, upon looking athwart the gloom, to see Count Campobello’s tall figure seated on the sofa, and on his knee, with one arm conjugally encircling his neck, sat Mademoiselle d’Antoville. The room was large, and carpeted à l’Italienne—that is to say, covered with green baize, and a quantity of straw laid under it, so

that Lord de Clifford being *en pantouffle*, his footsteps fell noiselessly. Giving one more look to convince himself that the tableau before him was no optical illusion, he took one of the candles, and quietly walking over to the unconscious pair, rudely seized his hitherto adored Laura by the arm, and flinging her to the other end of the room, overtook the count, who pusillanimously forsook his inamorata, and was making the best of his way towards the door, where Lord de Clifford saved him all further trouble by kicking him down stairs. On his return, after the performance of this little *cere-monie*, he found Mademoiselle d'Antoville upon her knees, in a fine somnambula attitude, with her hair let down about her shoulders, according to the most approved fashion of all heroines, guilty or guiltless: but all was in vain; nothing could she extort from her inexorable companion but a mandate to depart from under his roof in less than six hours. Never had Mademoiselle felt so intensely before, never did she feel so intensely again—no, not even when, a year after these events, she published a novel called “*Le Cœur Epuisé*,” and had a triumphal dinner given to her on the occasion, at Lointier's, by six members of la jeune France, who alternately addressed her as Aspasia and Corinne.

Meanwhile Lord de Clifford returned to his brother's room, foaming with rage, in the exuberance of which he proclaimed (Saville, whom he would not trust, having retired to bed) his Laura's delinquency.

"Those d——d women!" said he; "do what you will for them, it's all the same—no gratitude, no honour, no faith in any of them. It was only the day before yesterday that I replenished her wardrobe with what might have constituted the *trousseau* of a princess—d—n her!"

"I fear, my dear fellow," soothed Herbert, in the melancholy retrospective tone of experience, "that women are like what the late king of Naples said of his troops—'dress them as you will, they'll run away all the same.'"

"Well, well, it can't be helped," said Major Nonplus, between the interstices of a sonorous yawn in alto; "you'll be better in a day or two; but you see, just at first, love is like cheese—it digests everything but itself."

"Very just observation," said the dowager; "but," added she, taking her son's arm, and wishing Herbert good-night, "I want to say a few words to you on this here business."

As soon as Lord de Clifford had reached his mother's room, she said—

“You see, my dear, you must not mention this here circumstance of *momiselle’s* improper behaviour to Lady de Clifford—it’s better not, because, as she never liked her, and has been wishing her gone, I can say to her, that in your anxiety to consult all her just and reasonable wishes, you made it a *pint* to send *momiselle* away, and get an English governess in her place. Besides, it will look *vaustly* well to the world, as if you always let her have her way about the little *gurl’s* education, and so stop any remarks when she is taken from her and put to school, which is what I wish you to do, my dear, as it will be *vaustly* cheaper, and prevent her mother having so much influence over her. But you see, my dear, all these here sort of things require caution and prudence on account of the ill-nature of the world; but, as I always tell you, *you* are a *vaust* deal too open and candid.”

“And as I always say, my dear ma’am, you certainly are the cleverest woman and best manager in the world,” rejoined the worthy son of this amiable parent, as he kissed her hand and wished her good-night, or rather morning. But somehow or other, notwithstanding these wise precautions, by ten o’clock the next day, Lady de Clifford, in common with every

other inmate of the hotel, was quite *au fait* to the scene between her husband and Count Campobello, and the true cause of Mademoiselle d'Antoville's departure. Still it was a relief to know that she was gone on any terms; and as for little Julia, she felt nothing but unmingled delight at finding that she should now wholly and solely be with her own dear mother and aunt.

Herbert Grimstone, being perfectly convalescent in three or four days after his accident, it was decided that they should return to England, *viâ* Marseilles, the following week. The Seymours and Monsieur de Rivoli were to accompany them as far as Paris, but Major Nonplus had threatened himself all the way to England.

The day before their departure, Lady de Clifford had been reading that very horrible but very clever book, Mr. Reynolds's "Parricide."

"The description of the parricide's father," said she to Fanny, laying down the book, "shows great knowledge of human nature—he says, 'he neither possessed any positive virtue nor vice'—and I know of but two words that accurately describe him—he was eminently selfish and insensible; in these two sentences all his atrocities are fully accounted for—the first

being the alpha and omega of all vice, and the latter a barrier which no virtue ever passes ; but still, I think, the moral of such powerful materials would have been much more subtle, consequently infinitely more useful, had he made both father and son equal monsters, equal destroyers of their own and others happiness, and still kept them *within* the pale of the law ; for then it would have been sufficiently *vrai-semblable* to have borne a comparison with the dire hourly and daily realities of life, all arising out of the same sources, parental neglect, and selfishness, and vanity let loose, like so many vicious, unbridled brutes, enacting the part of wild horses to that doomed Mazeppa, their possessor's fate.

“ One thing this work convinces me of,” continued Lady de Clifford, “ namely, that the writer is a perfect Æneas of a son, though, no doubt, that discriminating multiplied individual, the world, will vote him a parricide, and his book an autobiography, actions being of no import whatever, thanks to the omnipotence of the press ; therefore, in order to attain the reputation of great morality, people have only to write books filled with such claptraps as benevolence, virtue, morals, civil and religious liberty, &c., &c., &c., and thickly interlard it

with the greatest happiness of the greatest numbers, which being interpreted, means a total and most immoral disregard to the happiness and well-being of any and every individual. In short, to succeed in this enlightened age, when the march of intellect has billeted even every subaltern mind on that Marquis de Carabas of our social system, public opinion, to seem is everything, to be nothing; therefore let all that would propitiate this autocrat, follow the example of Glaucus, and forthwith exchange the golden arms of reality for Diomedes' brazen ones of assumption."

"All you say is too true," replied Fanny; and she sighed as she said it, for by the flush upon Julia's cheek, and the unusual brightness of her eyes, she could not but see how deeply she had been drawing from and referring to her own individual misfortunes.

"Do not go on reading that book, dearest," said she, "it would make you miserable, if you were not already so. Here is Mrs. Armytage, which, like every thing else of Mrs. Gore's, is clever and delightful; but in this she really outdoes herself, for I think the conception almost Shaksperian."

Julia was about to reply, when the dowager entered, and with her usual vulpine smile began

with, "My dear madam, I fear you will find the little *gurl* very troublesome just at present ; but you see, as you did not approve of her, De Clifford made it a *pint* to part with Momselle on that account, and—and——"

"On account of her conduct with Count Campobello, I suppose," interrupted Lady de Clifford, somewhat haughtily.

END OF VOL. II.

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